

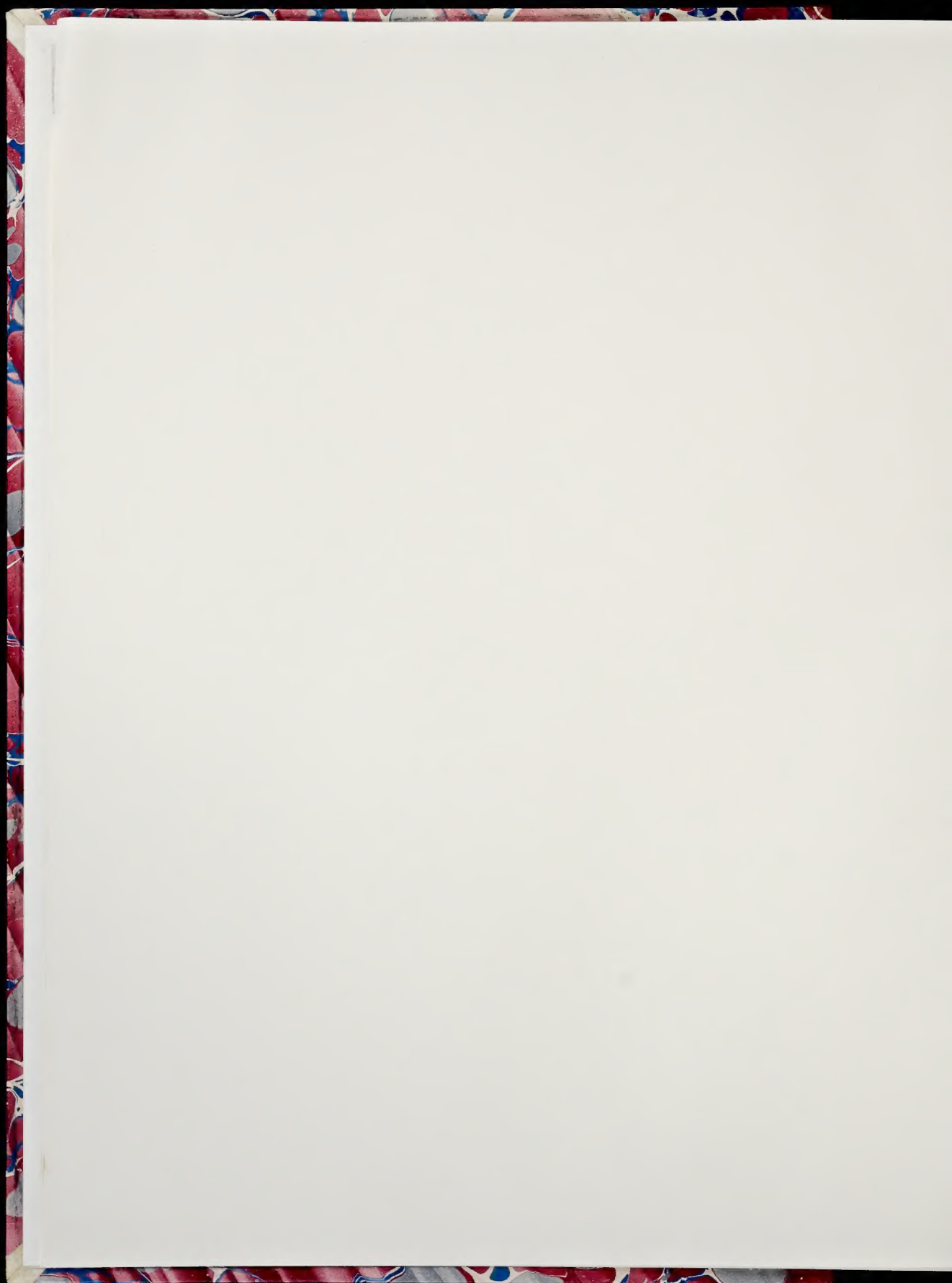


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1814









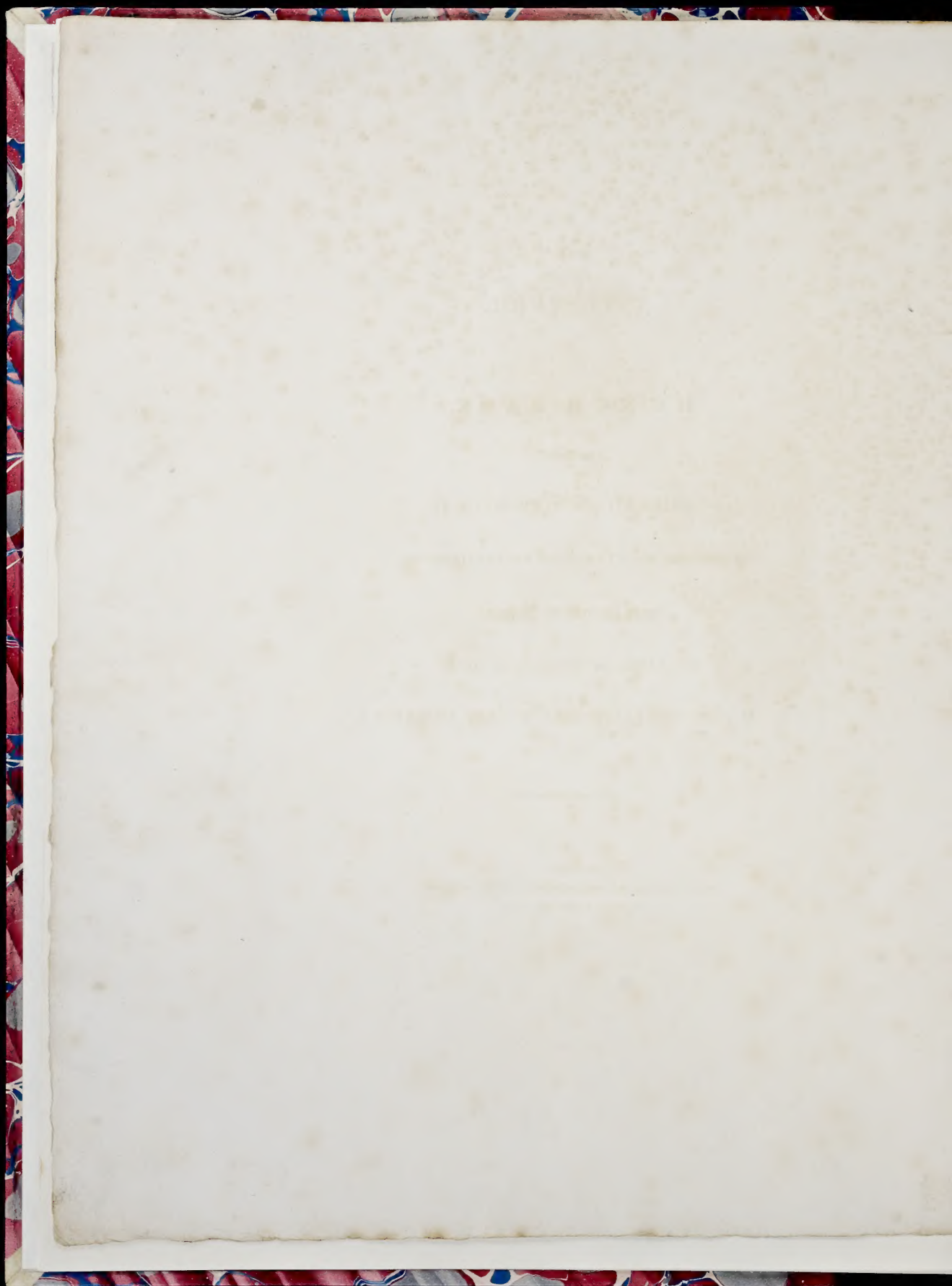
THE
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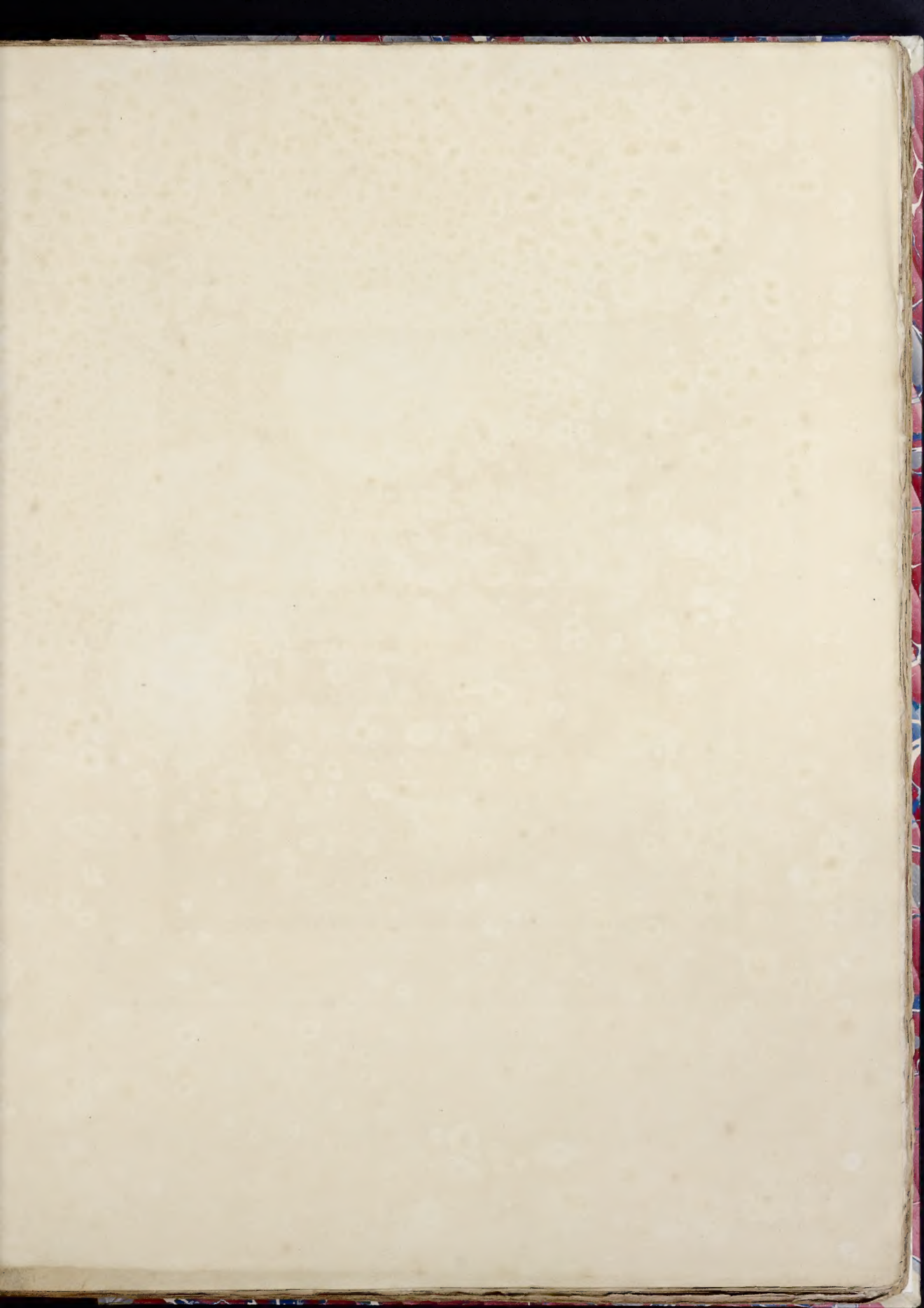
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1814.











THE
HISTORY
OF
LITTLE HUNCH-BACK.

THERE dwelt formerly at Casgar, on the extreme boundaries of Tartary, a taylor who had a handsome wife, whom he affectionately loved, and by whom he was beloved with reciprocal tenderness. One day, while he was at work, a little hunch-backed man seated himself at the shop-door and began to sing, accompanying himself upon a tabor. The taylor was pleased with his performance, and resolved to ask him to his house to entertain his wife: This little fellow, said he, will divert us both this evening. Little Hunch-back having accepted his invitation, the taylor shut up his shop, and took him home. Immediately after their arrival, the taylor's wife placed before them a good dish of fish which she had prepared for supper; but as Hunch-back was eating, he unluckily swallowed a bone, which, notwithstanding all that the taylor and his wife could do, choked him. This accident greatly alarmed them, apprehending that if the little man's death should come to the knowledge of the magistrate, they should both be punished as murderers. The taylor, however, devised a scheme to get rid of the corpse. The thought having occurred to him that a Jewish doctor lived just by, he instantly formed his plan, and in order to put it in execution, his wife and he took the corpse, the one by the feet and the other by the head, and carried it to the physician's house. They knocked at the door, from which a steep flight of stairs led to his apartment. The servant-maid came down,

without a light, and opening the door, demanded what they wanted. Have the goodness, replied the taylor, to tell your master we have brought him a man who is very ill, and wants his advice. Here, continued he, putting a piece of money into her hand, give him that to convince him that we do not mean to impose upon him. While the servant was gone to convey the message to her master, the taylor and his wife carried hunch-back's corpse to the head of the stairs, and leaving it there, hurried away.

In the mean time, the maid told the doctor, that a man and a woman waited for him at the door, desiring he would come down and look at a sick man whom they had brought with them, and gave him the money she had received. The doctor was delighted beyond measure: from being paid beforehand, he thought it must needs be a good patient, and ought not to be neglected. Light, light, cried he to the maid, follow me quickly. As he spoke, he hastily ran towards the head of the stairs, and came against the corpse with so much violence that he precipitated it to the bottom, and had nearly fallen with it.—Bring me a light, he again exclaimed; quick, quick. At last the servant arrived, and he descended the stairs with her; but when he saw that what he had kicked down was a dead man, he was so frightened, that he invoked Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Esdras, and all the other prophets of his nation. Unhappy man that I am, said he, why did I attempt to come without a light! I have killed the poor fellow who was brought to me to be cured: doubtless I am the cause of his death, and unless Esdras's ass come to my assistance, I am ruined: Alas! I shall soon be dragged out of my house as a murderer.

Notwithstanding the perplexity into which he was thrown, he had the precaution to shut his door, lest any one passing by should observe the accident, of which he reckoned himself to be the author. He then took the corpse into his wife's chamber, who had nearly fainted at the sight. Alas, she exclaimed, what will become of us if we do not devise some expedient to get the body out of our house this night? If we harbour it till morning we are undone. What a deplorable calamity is this! What have you done to kill this man? That is not now the question, interrupted the Jew; our business at present is, to find some means to avert the evil which threatens us.









The doctor and his wife immediately deliberated on the mode by which they should get rid of the corpse. The doctor after racking his brains for some time, could think of no stratagem to relieve his embarrassment; but his wife, who was more fertile in invention, said, A thought has just struck me; let us carry the corpse to the terrace of our house, and throw it down the chimney of our Mussulmaun neighbour.

This Mussulmaun was one of the sultan's purveyors who was employed to furnish oil, butter, and articles of a similar nature, and had a magazine in his house, where the rats and mice made prodigious havoc.

The Jewish doctor approving the proposed scheme, his wife and he took the little hunch-back to the roof of the house; and placing ropes under his arms, let him down the chimney into the purveyor's chamber, and managed the business so dexterously that he stood upright against the wall, as if he had been alive. When they found he had reached the bottom, they pulled up the ropes, and left the corpse in that posture. They had scarcely reached their apartment, when the purveyor, who had just returned from a wedding-feast, went into his room, with a light in his hand. He was not a little surprised to discover a man standing in his chimney; but being a stout fellow, and taking him to be a thief, he seized a stick, and making straight up to hunch-back, exclaimed, Ah, ha, I thought they were the rats and mice that ate my butter and tallow; but it is you, is it, who come down the chimney to rob me? But I think you will have no wish to repeat your visit: so saying he began his attack upon hunch-back, and struck him several times with his stick. The corpse fell down, and the purveyor redoubled his blows. But, observing that the body did not move, he stood a little time to observe it; and then, perceiving that it was lifeless, his anger gave place to terror. Wretched man that I am, exclaimed he, what have I done! I have killed a man; alas, I have carried my revenge too far. Good God, unless thou pity me my life is gone! Cursed, ten thousand times accursed, be the fat and the oil that led me to commit so criminal an action. He stood some time pale and thunderstruck; he fancied he already saw the officers of justice come to drag him to condign punishment, and knew not what resolution to take.

The purveyor, while dealing out his blows, had not observed the little man's hunch

back, but as soon as he perceived it, he uttered a thousand imprecations against him. Ah, thou cursed hunch-back, cried he, thou crooked wretch, would to God thou hadst robbed me of all my fat, and I had not found thee here. I should not then have been thrown into this perplexity. Ye stars that twinkle in the heavens, give your light to none but me in this dangerous juncture. As soon as he had uttered these words, he took hunch-back upon his shoulders, and carried him to the end of the street, and placing him in an upright posture against a shop, returned without once looking behind.

A few minutes before day-break, a Christian merchant, who was very rich, and furnished the sultan's palace with various articles, having sat up all night at a debauch, happened to pass this way to the bath. Though he was intoxicated, he was sensible that the night was far spent, and that the people would soon be called to morning prayers; he therefore quickened his pace to get to the bath in time, lest some Mussulmaun, as he went to the mosque, should meet him and carry him to prison for a drunkard. When he reached the end of the street, he had occasion to stop by the shop where the sultan's purveyor had put hunch-back's body; which being jostled by him, tumbled upon the merchant's back. The merchant thinking he was attacked by a robber, knocked it down, and after repeating his blows, called out thieves.

The outcry alarmed the watch, who came up immediately, and finding a Christian beating a Mussulmaun, for hunch-back was of the true faith, What reason have you, demanded he, to abuse a Mussulmaun in this manner? He would have robbed me, replied the merchant, and jumped upon my back in order to seize me by the throat. If such was his intention, answered the watch, you have revenged yourself sufficiently; come, get away from him. As he spoke he stretched out his hand to help little hunch-back up, but observing he was dead, What! said he, is it thus that a Christian dares to assassinate a Mussulmaun? So saying, he seized the Christian, and took him to the house of the officer of the police, where he was kept till the judge had arisen, and was ready to examine him. In the mean time, the Christian merchant became sober, and the more he reflected upon his adventure, the less could he conceive how such slight blows could have killed the man.









The judge having heard the report of the watch, and viewed the corpse, which had been conveyed to his house, began to question the Christian merchant, who could not deny the crime, though he had not committed it. But the judge considering that little hunch-back belonged to the sultan, for he was one of his buffoons, would not put the Christian to death till he knew the sultan's pleasure. For this purpose he went to the palace, and having acquainted the sultan with what had happened, received this answer; I have no mercy to shew to a Christian who kills a Mussulmaun. Upon this the judge ordered a stake to be prepared, and sent criers all over the city to proclaim that they were about to impale a Christian for killing a Mussulmaun.

At length, the merchant was brought to the place of execution; but as the executioner was about to do his duty, the sultan's purveyor pushed through the crowd, calling to him to stop, for that the Christian had not committed the murder, he being himself the criminal. Upon this, the officer who attended the execution began to question the purveyor, who related every circumstance respecting the mode in which he had killed the little hunch-back, and how he had conveyed the corpse to the place where the Christian merchant had found it. You were about, added he, to put to death an innocent person; for how can he be guilty of the death of a man who was dead before he touched him? It is enough for me to have killed a Mussulmaun, without loading my conscience with the death of a Christian also who is not guilty.

The sultan of Casgar's purveyor having thus publicly charged himself with the death of little hunch-back, the officer felt himself obliged to do the merchant justice by liberating him. Let the Christian go, said he to the executioner, and impale this man in his stead, since it appears by his own confession that he is the offender. The executioner accordingly released the merchant, and seized the purveyor; but just as he was going to impale him, he heard the voice of the Jewish doctor, earnestly intreating him to suspend the execution, and make room for him to approach.

When he appeared before the judge, My lord, said he, this Mussulmaun whom you are about to execute is not guilty. I am the criminal. Last night a man and a woman, unknown to me, came to my house with a sick man; my maid went and opened the door

without a light, and received from them a piece of money with a commission to desire me to step down and look at the patient. While she was delivering her message, they conveyed the sick person to the stair head, and disappeared. I hastened without waiting for my servant to bring a light, and in the dark happened to stumble against the sick person, and kick him down stairs. I soon perceived that he was dead, and that it was the crooked Mussulmaun whose death you are about to avenge. My wife and I took the corpse, and, after conveying it to the roof of the purveyor, our next neighbour, whom you were going to put to death unjustly, let it down the chimney into his chamber. The purveyor finding the body in this position, took the little man for a thief, and after beating him, concluded he had killed him. But that this was not the cause of his death you will be convinced by my deposition; I am the sole author of the murder; and though it was committed undesignedly, I am resolved to expiate my crime, that I may not have to charge myself with the death of two Mussulmauns.

The chief justice being thus persuaded that the Jewish doctor was the murderer, ordered the executioner to seize him, and release the purveyor. Accordingly the doctor was just going to be impaled, when the taylor appeared, crying to the executioner to hold his hand, and make way for him, that he might come and confess to the chief judge. Room being made, My lord, said he, you have narrowly escaped taking away the lives of three innocent persons; but if you will have the patience to hear me, I will discover to you the real murderer of hunch-back. If his death is to be expiated by another, that must be mine. Yesterday, towards the evening, as I was at work in my shop, and was disposed to be merry, the little hunch-back came to my door half-drunk, and sat down. He sung a little, and I invited him to pass the evening at my house. He accepted the invitation, and went home with me. We sat down to supper, and I gave him a plate of fish; but in eating, a bone stuck in his throat, and though my wife and I did our utmost to relieve him, he died in a few minutes. His death afflicted us extremely, and for fear of being charged with it, we carried the corpse to the Jewish doctor's house and knocked. The maid came and opened the door; I desired her to return and request her master to come down and give his advice to a sick person whom we had brought









with us; and, in order to secure his attendance, I desired her to give him a piece of money, which I put into her hand. When she was gone, I carried hunch-back up stairs, and laid him upon the uppermost step, and then my wife and I made the best of our way home. The doctor coming, threw the corpse down stairs, and concluded himself to be the author of his death. This being the case, continued he, release the doctor, and let me die in his stead.

The chief justice, and all the spectators, wondered at the strange events which had ensued upon the death of the little hunch-back. Let the Jewish doctor go, said the judge, and seize the taylor, since he confesses the crime. It is certain, continued he, this history is very remarkable, and deserves to be recorded in letters of gold. The executioner having dismissed the doctor, prepared to impale the taylor.

It happened that just at this time the sultan of Casgar, wanting the company of his crooked jester, asked where he was? One of his officers replied; Hunch-back, Sir, having got drunk last night, contrary to his custom slipped out of the palace, in order to stroll about the city, and this morning was found dead. A man was brought before the chief justice, charged with the murder; but when he was going to be impaled, up came a man, and after him a second, who took the charge upon themselves and cleared one another, and the judge is now examining a third, who gives himself out for the real author of the murder.

Upon this intelligence the sultan of Casgar sent an officer to the place of execution. Go, said he, with all expedition, and tell the judge to bring the accused persons before me immediately; and bring also the corpse of poor hunch-back, that I may see him once more. Accordingly the officer went, and happened to arrive just as the executioner had laid his hands upon the taylor. He called aloud to him to forbear. The executioner knowing the officer, did not dare to proceed, but released the taylor; and then the officer acquainted the judge with the sultan's pleasure. The judge obeyed, and went directly to the palace, accompanied by the taylor, the Jewish doctor, the purveyor, and the Christian merchant; and made four of his men carry hunch-back's corpse along with him.

When they appeared in the sultan's presence, the judge threw himself at his feet; and after he had risen, gave him a faithful relation of what he knew of hunch-back's story. The sultan deemed it so extraordinary, that he ordered his own historian to write it down with all the circumstances. Then addressing himself to the audience; Did you ever hear, said he, of any occurrences so surprising as those which have happened on account of my little hunch-backed buffoon? The Christian merchant, after falling down, and touching the earth with his forehead, replied: Most puissant monarch, I know a story yet more astonishing than this; if your majesty will give me leave, I will relate it. The circumstances are such, that no one can hear them without emotion.—The sultan having given him permission to proceed, the merchant spoke as follows.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

SIR, before I commence the recital, I beg leave to acquaint you, that I have not the honour to be born in any part of your majesty's empire. I am a foreigner, born at Cairo in Egypt, a Copt by nation, and by religion a Christian. My father was a broker, and realized considerable property, which he left me at his death. I followed his example, and pursued the same employment. While I was one day standing in the public inn frequented by the corn merchants, there came up to me a handsome young man, well drest, and mounted on an ass. He saluted me, and pulling out a handkerchief, in which he had a sample of sesame or Turkey corn, asked me how much a bushel of such sesame was worth.

I examined the corn, and told him it was worth a hundred dirhems of silver per bushel. Pray, said he, look out for some merchant to take it at that price, and come to me at the Victory gate, where you will see a khan at a distance from the houses. So saying, he left me the sample and departed. I shewed it to several merchants, who told me, that they would take as much as I could spare at a hundred and ten









dirhems per bushel, so that I reckoned on getting ten dirhems per bushel for my commission. Full of the expectation of this profit, I went to the Victory gate, where I found the young merchant expecting me, and he took me into his granary, which was full of sesame. He had then a hundred and fifty bushels, which I measured out, and having carried them off upon asses, sold them for five thousand dirhems of silver. Out of this sum, said the young man, there are five hundred dirhems coming to you, at the rate of ten dirhems per bushel. This I give you; and as for the rest of the money, take it out of the merchants' hands, and keep it till I call or send for it, for I have no need of it at present. I answered, it should be ready for him whenever he pleased to demand it; and so, kissing his hand, took leave of him, with a grateful sense of his generosity.

A month passed before he came near me, when he asked for the sum he had committed to my trust. I told him it was ready, and should be counted to him immediately. He was mounted on his ass, and I desired him to alight, and do me the honour to eat a mouthful with me before he received his money. No, said he, I cannot alight at present, I have urgent business that obliges me to be at a place just by; but I will return this way, and then take the money, which I desire you would have in readiness. This said, he disappeared, and I still expected his return, but it was a full month before I saw him again. This young merchant, thought I, has great confidence in me, leaving so great a sum in my hands without knowing me; any other man would have been afraid I should have run away with it. To be short, he came again at the end of the third month, mounted as before on his ass, but more handsomely dressed.

As soon as I saw him I intreated him to alight, and asked if he would not take his money? There is no hurry, replied he, with a pleasant easy air, I know it is in good hands; I will come for it when my other money is all gone: Adieu, continued he, I will return towards the end of the week. With that he struck the ass, and soon disappeared. Well, thought I, he says he will see me towards the end of the week, but he may not perhaps return for a great while; I will make the most I can of his money, which may bring me considerable profit.

As it happened, I was not deceived in my conjecture; for it was a full year before I

saw my young merchant again. He then appeared as richly appareled as before, but seemed to have something on his spirits. I asked him to do me the honour to walk into my house. For this time, replied he, I will: but on condition that you put yourself to no extraordinary charge on my account. I will do just as you please, said I, only do me the favour to alight and walk in. Accordingly he complied. I gave orders to have a repast prepared, and while this was doing, we entered into conversation. When all things were ready, we sat down. I observed he took the first mouthful with his left hand, and not with the right. I was at a loss what to think of this. Ever since I have known this young man, said I inwardly, he has always appeared very polite; is it possible he can do this out of contempt? What can be the reason he does not use his right hand?

After we had done our repast, and every thing was taken away, we sat upon a sofa, and I presented him a lozenge by way of dainty; but still he took it with his left hand. I said to him, Pardon, Sir, the liberty I take in asking you what reason you have for not using your right hand? Perhaps you have some complaint in it. Instead of answering, he heaved a deep sigh, and pulling out his right arm, which he had hitherto kept under his vest, shewed me, to my great astonishment, that the hand had been cut off. Doubtless you were displeased, said he, to see me feed myself with the left hand; but you now perceive it was out of my power to do otherwise. May one ask, said I, by what mischance you lost your right hand? Upon that he burst into tears, and after wiping his eyes, gave me the following relation.

You must know that I am a native of Bagdad, the son of a rich merchant, the most eminent in that city for rank and opulence. I had scarcely launched into the world, when falling into the company of travellers, and hearing their wonderful accounts of Egypt, especially of Grand Cairo, I was interested by their discourse, and felt a strong desire to travel. But my father was then alive, and would not grant me permission. At length he died; and being then my own master, I resolved to take a journey to Cairo. I laid out a large sum of money in the purchase of several sorts of fine stuffs of Bagdad and Moussol, and departed.

Arriving at Cairo, I went to the khan, called the khan of Mesrou, and there took

lodgings, with a warehouse for my bales, which I had brought with me upon camels. This done, I retired to my chamber to rest, after the fatigue of my journey, and gave some money to my servants, with orders to buy some provisions and dress them. After I had eaten, I went to view the castle, some mosques, the public squares, and the other most remarkable places.

Next day I dressed myself, and ordered some of the finest and richest of my bales to be selected and carried by my slaves to the Circassian bezestein*, whither I followed. I had no sooner made my appearance, than I was surrounded with brokers and criers who had heard of my arrival. I gave patterns of my stuffs to several of the criers, who shewed them all over the bezestein; but none of the merchants offered near so much as the prime cost and carriage of the goods. This vexed me, and the criers observing I was dissatisfied, said, If you will take our advice, we will put you in a way to sell your goods without loss.

I asked them what course they would have me pursue? Divide your goods, said they, among several merchants, they will sell them by retail; and twice a week, that is on Mondays and Thursdays, you may receive what money they may have taken. By this means you will turn your goods to advantage, and the merchants will gain by you. In the mean while you will have time to take your pleasure about the town, or go upon the Nile.

I took their advice, and conducted them to my warehouse; from whence I brought all my goods to the bezestein, and there divided them among the merchants whom they represented as most reputable and able to pay; and the merchants gave me a formal receipt before witnesses, stipulating that I should not make any demands upon them for the first month.

Having thus regulated my affairs, my mind was occupied with ordinary pleasures. I contracted acquaintance with divers persons of nearly the same age with myself, which made the time pass agreeably. After the first month had expired, I began to visit my

* A bezestein is a public place where silk stuffs, and other precious things, are exposed to sale.

merchants twice a week, taking with me a public officer to inspect their books of sale, and a banker to see that they paid me in good money, and to regulate the value of the several coins. Every pay-day, I had a large sum to carry home to my lodging at the *khan* of Mesrour. I went on other days to pass the morning sometimes at one merchant's house, and sometimes at another's. In short, I amused myself in conversing with them, and seeing what passed in the *bezestein*.

One Monday, as I was sitting in a merchant's shop, whose name was *Buddir ad Deen*, a lady of quality, as might easily be perceived by her air, her apparel, and by a well-dressed slave attending her, came into the shop, and sat down by me. Her external appearance, joined to a natural grace that shone in all her actions, prepossessed me in her favour, and inspired me with a desire to be better acquainted with her. I know not whether she observed that I took pleasure in gazing on her, and whether this attention on my part was not agreeable to her; but she let down the crape that hung over the muslin which covered her face, and gave me the opportunity of seeing her large black eyes; which perfectly charmed me. In fine, she inflamed my love to the height by the agreeable sound of her voice, her graceful carriage in saluting the merchant, and asking him how he had been since she had seen him last.

After conversing with him some time upon indifferent subjects, she gave him to understand that she wanted a particular kind of stuff with a gold ground; that she came to his shop, as affording the best choice of any in all the *bezestein*; and that if he had any such as she asked for, he would oblige her by shewing them. *Buddir ad Deen* produced several pieces, one of which she pitched upon, and he asked for it eleven hundred *dirhems* of silver. I will, said she, give you your price for it, but I have not money enough about me; so I hope you will give me credit till to-morrow, and in the mean time allow me to carry home the stuff. I shall not fail, added she, to send you to-morrow the eleven hundred *dirhems*. Madam, said *Buddir ad Deen*, I would very willingly give you credit if the stuff were my own; but it belongs to this young man, and this is the day on which we settle our accounts. Why, said the lady in surprise, do you use me so? Am not I a customer to your shop? And when I have bought of you, and taken home the things

without paying for them, have I in any instance failed to send you the money next morning? Madam, replied the merchant, all this is true, but this very day I have occasion for the money. There, said she, throwing the goods to him, take your stuff, I care not for you nor any of the merchants. You are all alike; you respect no one. As she spoke, she rose up in anger, and walked out.

When I saw, said the young man, that the lady walked away, I felt interested on her behalf, and called her back, saying, Madam, do me the favour to return, perhaps I can find a way to satisfy you both. She returned, stating, it was on my account that she complied. Buddir ad Deen, said I to the merchant, what is the price you must have for this stuff, which belongs to me? I must have, replied he, eleven hundred dirhems, I cannot take less. Give it to the lady then, said I, let her take it home with her; I allow a hundred dirhems profit to yourself, and shall now write you a note, empowering you to deduct that sum upon the produce of the other goods you have of mine. I accordingly wrote, signed, and gave him the note, and then delivered the stuff to the lady. Madam, said I, you may take the stuff with you, and as for the money, you may either send it tomorrow or the next day; or, if you will, accept it as a present from me. Pardon me, returned she, I mean no such thing. You treat me with so much politeness, that I should be unworthy to appear in the world again, were I to omit making you my best acknowledgments. May God reward you, by an increase of your fortune; may you live many years after I am dead; may the gate of paradise be open to you when you remove to the other world, and may all the city proclaim your generosity.

These words inspired me with some assurance. Madam, I replied, I desire no other reward for the service I have done you than the happiness of seeing your face; which will repay me with interest. I had no sooner spoken than she turned towards me, took off her veil, and discovered to me a wonderful beauty. I became speechless with admiration. I could have gazed upon her for ever; but fearing any one should observe her, she quickly covered her face, and letting down the crape, took up the piece of stuff, and went away, leaving me in a very different state of mind from that in which I had entered the shop. I remained for some time in great confusion and perplexity. Before I took

leave of the merchant, I asked him, if he knew the lady: Yes, said he, she is the daughter of an emir.

I went back to the khan of Mesrour, and sat down to supper, but could not eat, neither could I close my eyes all the night, which seemed the longest in my life. As soon as it was day I arose, in hopes of once more beholding the object that disturbed my repose: and to engage her affection, I dressed myself much richer than I had done the day preceding.

I had but just reached Buddir ad Decn's shop, when I saw the lady coming in more magnificent apparel than before, and attended by her slave. When she entered, she did not regard the merchant, but addressing herself to me, said, Sir, you see I am punctual to my word. I am come for the express purpose of paying the sum you were so kind as to pass your word for yesterday, though you had no knowledge of me. Such uncommon generosity I shall never forget. Madam, said I, you had no occasion to be in such haste; I was well satisfied as to my money, and am sorry you should put yourself to so much trouble. I had been very unjust, answered she, if I had abused your generosity. With these words she put the money into my hand, and sat down by me.

Having this opportunity of conversing with her, I determined to improve it, and mentioned to her the love I had for her; but she rose and left me very abruptly, as if she had been angry with the declaration I had made. I followed her with my eyes as long as she continued in sight; then taking leave of the merchant, walked out of the bezestein, without knowing whither I went. I was musing on this adventure, when I felt somebody pulling me behind, and turning to see who it might be, was agreeably surprised to perceive it was the lady's slave. My mistress, said she, I mean the young lady you spoke to in the merchant's shop, wants to speak with you, if you please to give yourself the trouble to follow me. Accordingly I followed her, and found her mistress waiting for me in a banker's shop.

She made me sit down by her, and spoke to this purpose. Do not be surprised, that I left you so abruptly. I thought it not proper, before that merchant, to give a favourable answer to the discovery you made of your affection for me. But to speak the truth,

I was so far from being offended, that the declaration gave me pleasure; and I account myself infinitely happy in having a man of your merit for my lover. I do not know what impression the first sight of me may have made on you, but I assure you, I had no sooner beheld you than I found my heart moved with the tenderest emotions. Since yesterday I have done nothing but think of what you said to me; and my eagerness to seek you this morning may convince you of my regard. Madam, I replied, transported with love and joy, nothing can be more agreeable to me than this declaration. No passion can exceed that with which I love you. My eyes were dazzled with so many charms, that my heart yielded without resistance. Let us not trifle away the time in needless discourse, said she, interrupting me; I make no doubt of your sincerity, and you shall quickly be convinced of mine. Will you do me the honour to come to my residence? Or if you will, I will go to yours. Madam, I returned, I am a stranger lodged in a khan, which is not a suited place for the reception of a lady of your quality. It is more proper that I should visit you at your house; have the goodness to tell me where it is. The lady consented; I live, said she, in Devotion-street; come on Friday, which is the day after to-morrow, after noon-prayers, and ask for the house of Abon Schama, sirnamed Bercour, late master of the emirs; there you will find me. This said, we parted; and I passed the next day in great impatience.

On Friday I put on my richest apparel, and took fifty pieces of gold in my purse. I mounted an ass I had bespoken the day before, and set out, accompanied by the man of whom I had hired it. When we came to Devotion-street, I directed the owner of the ass to inquire for the house I wanted; he found it, and conducted me thither. I paid him liberally, directing him to observe narrowly where he left me, and not to fail to return next morning with the ass, to carry me again to the khan of Mesrour.

I knocked at the door, and presently two little female slaves, white as snow, and neatly dressed, came and opened it. Be pleased to come in, Sir, said they, our mistress expects you impatiently; these two days she has talked of nothing but you. I entered the court, and saw a pavilion raised seven steps, and surrounded with iron rails that parted it from a very pleasant garden. Besides the trees which only embellished the

place, and formed an agreeable shade, there was an infinite number of others loaded with all sorts of fruit. I was charmed with the warbling of a great number of birds, that joined their notes to the murmurings of a fountain, in the middle of a parterre enamelled with flowers. This fountain formed a very agreeable object; four large gilded dragons at the angles of the bason, which was of a square form, spouted out water clearer than rock-crystal. This delicious place gave me a charming idea of the conquest I had made. The two little slaves conducted me into a saloon magnificently furnished; and while one of them went to acquaint her mistress with my arrival, the other tarried with me, and pointed out to me the beauties of the hall.

I did not wait long in the hall ere the lady who had engaged my affections appeared, adorned with pearls and diamonds; but the splendour of her eyes far outshone that of her jewels. Her shape, which was now not disguised by the habit she wore in the city, appeared the most slender and delicate. I need not mention with what joy we met once more; it far exceeded all expression. When the first compliments were over, we sat down upon a sofa, and there conversed together with the highest satisfaction. The most delicious refreshments were served up to us; and after eating, we continued our conversation till night. We then had excellent wine brought up, and fruit adapted to promote drinking; and timed our cups to the sound of musical instruments, to which were added the voices of the slaves. The lady of the house sung herself, and by her songs raised my passion to the height. In short, I passed the night in full enjoyment.

Next morning, I slept under the bolster of the bed the purse with the fifty pieces of gold I had brought with me, and took leave of the lady, who asked me when I would see her again. Madam, I replied, I give you my promise to return this night. She seemed transported with my answer, and conducting me to the door, conjured me at parting to be mindful of my engagement.

The man who had carried me thither waited for me with his ass, which I mounted, and went directly to the khan; ordering the man to come to me again in the afternoon at a certain hour; to secure which, I deferred paying him till that time.

As soon as I arrived at my lodging, my first care was to order my people to buy a

lamb, and several sorts of cakes, which I sent by a porter as a present to the lady. When that was done, I attended to my business till the owner of the ass arrived. I then went along with him to the lady's house, and was received by her with as much joy as before, and entertained with equal magnificence.

Next morning I took leave, left her another purse with fifty pieces of gold, and returned to my khan.

I continued to visit the lady every day, and to leave her every time a purse with fifty pieces of gold, till the merchants whom I employed to sell my goods, and whom I visited regularly twice a week, had paid me the whole amount of what I had deposited with them; and, in short, I came at last to be moneyless, and without hope of having any more.

In this forlorn condition I walked out of my lodging, not knowing what course to take, and by chance went towards the castle, where there was a great concourse of people assembled to witness a spectacle given by the sultan of Egypt. As soon as I came up, I wedged in among the crowd, and by chance happened to stand by a horseman well mounted and handsomely clothed, who had upon the pommel of his saddle a bag, half open, with a string of green silk hanging out of it. I clapped my hand to the bag, concluding the silk-twist might be the string of a purse within: in the mean time a porter, with a load of wood upon his back, passed by on the other side of the horse so near, that the rider was forced to turn his head towards him, to avoid being hurt, or having his clothes torn by the wood. In that moment the devil tempted me; I took the string in one hand, and with the other pulled out the purse so dexterously, that nobody perceived me. The purse was heavy, and I did not doubt but it contained gold or silver.

As soon as the porter had passed, the horseman, who probably had some suspicion of what I had done while his head was turned, presently put his hand to his bag, and finding his purse was gone, gave me such a blow, that he knocked me down. This violence shocked all who saw it. Some took hold of the horse's bridle to stop him, and asked him what reason he had to strike me, or how he came to treat a Mussulmaun so rudely. Do not you trouble yourselves, said he briskly, I had reason for what I did; this fellow is a

thief. At these words I started up, and from my appearance every one took my part, and cried out he was a liar, for it was incredible a young man of my appearance should be guilty of so base an action: but while they were holding his horse by the bridle to favour my escape, unfortunately the judge passed by, who seeing such a crowd about the man on horseback, came up and asked what the matter was. Every body present reflected on the horseman for treating me so unjustly on the pretence of robbery.

The judge did not give ear to all that was said; but asked the horseman if he suspected any body besides me? He replied that he did not, and gave his reasons why he believed his suspicions were not groundless. Upon this the judge ordered his followers to seize me, which they presently did; and finding the purse upon me, exposed it to the view of all the people. The disgrace was so great, I could not bear it, and I swooned away. In the mean time the judge called for the purse.

When it was put into his hand, he asked the horseman if it was his, and how much money it contained. The horseman knew it to be his own, and assured the judge he had put twenty sequins into it. Upon which the judge called me before him; Come, young man, said he, confess the truth. Was it you that took the gentleman's purse from him? Do not wait for the torture to extort confession. Then with downcast eyes, thinking that if I denied the fact, they, having found the purse upon me, would convict me of a lie, to avoid a double punishment, I looked up and confessed my guilt. I had no sooner made the confession, than the judge called people to witness it, and ordered my hand to be cut off. This sentence was immediately put in execution, to the great regret of all the spectators; nay, I observed, by the horseman's countenance, that he was moved with pity as much as the rest. The judge would likewise have ordered my foot to be cut off, but I begged the horseman to intercede for my pardon; which he immediately obtained.

When the judge was gone, the horseman came up to me, and holding out the purse, said, I see plainly that necessity alone drove you to an action so disgraceful, and so unworthy of such a young man as you appear. Here, take the fatal purse; I freely give it you, and am heartily sorry for the misfortune you have endured. Having thus spoken, he went away. Being very weak by loss of blood, some of the good people of the neigh-

bourhood had the kindness to carry me into a house and give me a glass of cordial; they likewise dressed my arm, and wrapped up the dismembered hand in a cloth, which I carried away with me fastened to my girdle.

Had I returned to the khan of Mesrour in this melancholy condition, I should not have found there such relief as I wanted; and to attempt to go to the young lady was running a great hazard, it being likely she would not look upon me after being informed of my disgrace. I resolved, however, to put her to the trial; and to tire out the crowd that followed me, I turned down several by-streets, and at last arrived at the lady's house very weak, and so much fatigued, that I instantly threw myself upon a sofa, keeping my right arm under my garment, for I took great care to conceal my misfortune.

In the mean time the lady, hearing of my arrival, and that I was not well, came to me in haste; and seeing me pale and dejected, said, My dear love, what is the matter with you? Madam, I replied, dissembling, I have a violent pain in my head. She seemed much concerned, and asked me to sit down, for I had arisen to receive her. Tell me, said she, how your illness was occasioned. The last time I had the pleasure to see you, you were very well. There must be something that you conceal from me; let me know all. I stood silent; and instead of returning her an answer, tears trickled down my cheeks. I cannot conceive, resumed she, what it is that thus afflicts you. Have I unthinkingly given you any occasion of uneasiness? Or do you come to tell me you no longer love me? It is not that, madam, said I, heaving a deep sigh; your unjust suspicion adds to my affliction.

I could not think of discovering to her the true cause. When night came, supper was brought, and she pressed me to eat; but considering I could only feed myself with my left hand, I begged to be excused on the plea of having no appetite. It will return, said she, if you will but discover what you so obstinately conceal from me. Your want of appetite, without doubt, is owing solely to your irresolution. Alas! madam, returned I, I find I must resolve at last. I had no sooner spoken, than she filled me a cup full of wine, and offering it to me, said, Drink that, it will give you courage. I reached out my left hand, but as soon as I had taken the cup I redoubled my tears and sighs. Why do you

sigh and weep so bitterly? asked the lady; and why do you take the cup with your left hand, rather than your right? Ah! madam, I replied, I beseech you excuse me; I have a swelling in my right hand. Let me see it, said she; I will open it. I desired to be excused, alleging it was not ripe enough for such an operation; and drank off the cup, which was very large. The fumes of the wine, joined to my weakness and weariness, set me asleep, and I slept very soundly till morning.

In the mean time the lady, curious to know what ailed my right hand, lifted up my garment that covered it, and saw to her great astonishment that it was cut off; and that I had brought it along with me wrapt up in a cloth. She presently understood what was my reason for declining a discovery, notwithstanding all her pressing solicitation; and passed the night in the greatest uneasiness on account of my disgrace, which she concluded had been occasioned by the love I bore to her.

When I awoke, I discerned by her countenance that she was extremely grieved. However, that she might not increase my uneasiness, she said not a word. She called for jelly-broth of fowl, which she had ordered to be prepared, and made me eat and drink to recruit my strength. After this, I arose to depart; but she declared I should not go out of her doors. Though you tell me nothing of the matter, said she, I am persuaded I am the cause of the misfortune that has befallen you. The grief I feel on that account will soon end my days; but before I die, I must execute a design for your benefit. She had no sooner spoken, than she called for a judge and witnesses, and ordered a writing to be drawn up, putting me in possession of her whole property. After this was done, and every body dismissed, she opened a large trunk, where lay all the purses I had given her from the commencement of our acquaintance. There they are all entire, said she; I have not touched one of them. Here is the key; take it, for all is yours. After I had returned her thanks for her generosity and goodness; What I have done for you, said she, is nothing; I shall not be satisfied unless I die, to shew how much I love you. I conjured her, by all the powers of love, to relinquish such a fatal resolution. But all my remonstrances were ineffectual: she was so afflicted to see me have but one hand, that she sickened, and died after five or six weeks' illness.







FROM THE MERCHANT'S STORY



After mourning for her death as long as was decent, I took possession of all her property, a particular account of which she gave me before she died; and the corn you sold for me was part of it.

What I have now told you will plead my excuse for eating with my left hand. I am highly obliged to you for the trouble you have given yourself on my account. I can never sufficiently recompence your fidelity. Since I have still, thanks to God, a competent estate, notwithstanding I have spent a great deal, I beg you to accept of the sum now in your hand, as a present from me. I have besides a proposal to make to you. As I am obliged, on account of this fatal accident, to quit Cairo, I am resolved never to return to it again. If you choose to accompany me, we will trade together as equal partners, and share the profits.

I thanked the young man for his present, and willingly embraced the proposal of travelling with him, assuring him, that his interest should always be as dear to me as my own.

We fixed a day for our departure, and accordingly entered upon our travels. We passed through Syria and Mesopotamia, travelled all over Persia, and after stopping at several cities, came at last, sir, to your capital. Some time after our arrival here, the young man having formed a design of returning to Persia, and settling there, we balanced our accounts, and parted very good friends. He went from hence, and I, sir, continue here in your majesty's service. This is the story I had to relate. Does not your majesty find it more surprising than that of the hunch-back buffoon?

The sultan of Casgar was exceedingly enraged against the Christian merchant. Thou art a presumptuous fellow, said he, to tell me a story so little worth hearing, and then to compare it to that of my jester. Canst thou flatter thyself so far as to believe that the trifling adventures of a young debauchee are more interesting than those of little hunch-back? I will have you all impaled to revenge his death.

Hearing this, the purveyor prostrated himself at the sultan's feet. Sir, said he, I humbly beseech your majesty to suspend your anger, and hear my story; and if it appears to be more extraordinary than that of your jester, to pardon us. The sultan having granted his request, the purveyor proceeded.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE SULTAN OF CASGAR'S PURVEYOR.

SIR, a person of quality invited me yesterday to his daughter's wedding. I went to his house in the evening at the hour appointed, and found there a large company of men of the law, ministers of justice, and others of the first rank in the city. After the ceremony was over, we partook of a splendid feast. Among other dishes set upon the table, there was one seasoned with garlic, which was very delicious, and generally relished. We observed however, that one of the guests did not touch it, though it stood just before him. We invited him to taste it, but he intreated us not to press him. I will take good care, said he, how I touch any dish that is seasoned with garlic; I have not yet forgotten what the tasting of such a dish once cost me. We requested him to inform us what the reason was of his aversion to garlic. But before he had time to answer, the master of the house exclaimed, Is it thus you honour my table? This dish is excellent, do not expect to be excused from partaking of it; you must do me that favour as well as the rest. Sir, said the gentleman, who was a Bagdad merchant, I hope you do not think my refusal proceeds from any mistaken delicacy; if you insist on my compliance I will submit, but it must be on this condition, that after having eaten, I may, with your permission, wash my hands with alcali forty times, forty times more with the ashes of the same plant, and forty times again with soap. I hope you will not feel displeased at this stipulation, as I have made an oath never to taste garlic but on these terms.

As the master of the house would not dispense with the merchant's compliance, he ordered his servants to provide a bason of water, together with some alcali, the ashes of the same plant, and soap, that the merchant might wash as often as he pleased. After he had given these instructions, he addressed the merchant and said, I hope you will now do as we do.

The merchant, apparently displeased with the constraint put upon him, took up a

bit, which he put to his mouth trembling, and ate with a reluctance that astonished us. But what surprised us yet more was, that he had no thumb; which none of us had observed before, though he had eaten of other dishes. You have lost your thumb, said the master of the house. This must have been occasioned by some extraordinary accident, a relation of which will be agreeable to the company. Sir, replied the merchant, I have no thumb on either hand. As he spoke he put out his left hand, and shewed us that what he said was true. But this is not all, continued he: I have no great toe on either of my feet: I was maimed in this manner by an unheard-of adventure, which I am willing to relate, if you will have the patience to hear me. The account will excite at once your astonishment and your pity. Only allow me first to wash my hands. With this he rose from the table, and after washing his hands a hundred and twenty times, re-seated himself, and proceeded with his narrative as follows.

In the reign of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed, my father lived at Bagdad, the place of my nativity, and was reputed one of the richest merchants in the city. But being a man addicted to his pleasures, and neglecting his private affairs, instead of leaving me an ample fortune, he died in such embarrassed circumstances, that I was reduced to the necessity of using all the economy possible to discharge the debts he had contracted. I at last, however, paid them all; and by care and good management my little fortune began to wear a smiling aspect.

One morning, as I opened my shop, a lady mounted upon a mule, and attended by an eunuch and two slaves, stopped near my door, and with the assistance of the eunuch alighted. Madam, said the eunuch, I told you you would be too early; you see there is no one yet in the bezestein: had you taken my advice, you might have saved yourself the trouble of waiting here. The lady looked round, and perceiving no shop open but mine, asked permission to sit there till the other merchants arrived. With this request I of course readily complied.

The lady accordingly took a seat, and observing there was no one in the bezestein but the eunuch and myself, uncovered her face to take the air. I had never beheld any thing so beautiful. I became instantly enamoured, and kept my eyes fixed upon her. I

flattered myself that my attention was not unpleasant to her; for she allowed me time to view her deliberately, and only concealed her face so far as she thought necessary to avoid being observed.

After she had again lowered her veil, she told me she wanted several sorts of the richest and finest stuffs, and asked me if I had them. Alas! madam, I replied, I am but a young man just beginning the world; I have not capital sufficient for such extensive traffic. I am much mortified not to be able to accommodate you with the articles you want. But to save you the trouble of going from shop to shop, when the merchants arrive, I will, if you please, get those articles from them, and ascertain the lowest prices. She assented to this proposal, and entered into conversation with me, which I prolonged, making her believe the merchants that could furnish what she wanted were not yet come.

I was not less charmed with her wit than I had been before with the beauty of her face; but was obliged to forego the pleasure of her conversation. I ran for the stuffs, and after she had fixed upon what she liked, we agreed for five thousand dirhems of coined silver; I wrapped up the goods in a small bundle, and gave it to the eunuch, who put it under his arm. She then rose and took her leave. I followed her with my eyes till she had reached the bezestein gate, and even after she had remounted her mule.

The lady had no sooner disappeared, than I perceived that love had led me to a serious oversight. It had so engrossed my thoughts, that I did not reflect that she went away without paying, and that I had not informed myself who she was, or where she resided. I soon felt sensible, however, that I was accountable for a large sum to the merchants, who, perhaps, would not have patience to wait for their money: I went to them, and made the best excuse I could, pretending that I knew the lady; and then returned home, equally affected with love, and with the burden of such a heavy debt.

I had desired my creditors to wait eight days for their money: when this period had elapsed, they began to importune me. I then intreated them to give me eight days more, to which they consented; but the next day I saw the lady enter the bezestein, mounted on her mule, with the same attendants as before, and exactly at the same hour of the day.

She came direct to my shop. I have made you wait some time, said she, but here is your money at last; carry it to the banker, and see that it is all good and right. The eunuch who carried the money went along with me to the banker, and we found it very right. I returned, and had the happiness of conversing with the lady till all the shops of the bezestein were open. Though we talked but of ordinary things, she gave them such a turn, that they appeared new and uncommon; and convinced me that I was not mistaken in admiring her wit at our first interview.

As soon as the merchants had arrived and opened their shops, I carried to the respective owners the money due for their stuffs, and was readily intrusted with more, which the lady had desired to see. She chose some from these to the value of one thousand pieces of gold, and carried them away as before without paying; nay, without speaking a word, or informing me who she was. What principally distressed me was the consideration that while at this rate she risked nothing, she left me without any security against being made answerable for the goods in case she did not return. She has paid me, thought I, a considerable sum; but she leaves me responsible for a greater. Surely she cannot be a cheat. The merchants do not know her; they will all come upon me. In short, my love was not so powerful as to stifle the uneasiness I felt, when I reflected upon the circumstances in which I was placed. A whole month passed before I heard any thing of the lady again; and during that time my alarm increased. The merchants were impatient for their money, and to satisfy them, I was going to sell off all I had, when one morning the lady returned with the same equipage as before.

Take your weights, said she, and weigh the gold I have brought you. These words dispelled my fear, and inflamed my love. Before we counted the money, she asked me several questions, and particularly if I was married. I answered I never had been. Then reaching out the gold to the eunuch, Let us have your interposition, said she, to accommodate our matters. Upon which the eunuch fell a laughing, and calling me aside, made me weigh the gold. While I was thus occupied, the eunuch whispered in my ear—I know by your eyes you love this lady, and I am surprised that you have not the courage to disclose your passion. She loves you more ardently than you do her. Do

not imagine that she has any real occasion for your stuffs. She only makes this her pretence to come here, because you have inspired her with an ardent passion. It was for this reason she enquired of you if you were married. It will be your own fault, if you do not marry her. It is true, I replied, I have loved her since I first beheld her; but I durst not aspire to the happiness of thinking my attachment could meet her approbation. I am entirely hers, and shall not fail to retain a grateful sense of your good offices in this affair.

I finished weighing the gold, and while I was putting it into the bag, the eunuch turned to the lady, and told her I was satisfied; that being the word they had agreed upon between themselves. Presently after, the lady rose and took her leave; telling me she would send her eunuch to me, and that I had only to obey the directions he might give me in her name.

I carried each of the merchants their money, and waited some days with impatience for the eunuch. At last he came, and I received him very kindly, and inquired after his mistress's health. You are, said he, the happiest lover in the world; she is impatient to see you; and were she mistress of her own conduct, would not fail to come to you herself, and willingly pass in your society all the days of her life. Her noble mien and graceful carriage, I replied, convinced me, that she was a lady above the common rank. You have not erred in your judgment on that head, said the eunuch; she is the favourite of Zobeide the caliph's wife, who is the more affectionately attached to her from having brought her up from her infancy, and intrusts her with all her affairs. Having a wish to marry, she has declared to her mistress that she has fixed her affections upon you, and has desired her consent. Zobeide told her, she would not refuse it; but that she would see you first, in order to judge if she had made a good choice; in which case she meant herself to defray the expenses of the wedding. Thus, you see, your felicity is certain; since you have pleased the favourite, you will be equally agreeable to the mistress, who seeks only to oblige her, and would by no means thwart her inclination. All you have to do is to come to the palace. I am sent hither to invite you. My resolution is already formed, said I, and I am ready to follow you whithersoever you please. Very well, said the

eunuch; but you know men are not allowed to enter the ladies' apartments in the palace, and you must be introduced with great secrecy. The favourite lady has contrived the matter well. On your side you must act your part discreetly; for if you do not, your life is at stake.

I gave him repeated assurances punctually to perform whatever he might require. Then, said he, in the evening, you must be at the mosque built by the caliph's lady on the bank of the Tygris, and wait there till somebody comes to conduct you. To this I agreed; and after passing the day in great impatience, went in the evening to the prayer that is said an hour and a half after sun-set in the mosque, and remained there after all the people had departed.

Soon after I saw a boat making up to the mosque, the rowers of which were all eunuchs, who came on shore, put several large trunks into the mosque, and then retired. One of them staid behind, whom I perceived to be the eunuch that had accompanied the lady, and had been with me that morning. I saw the lady also enter the mosque; and approaching her, told her I was ready to obey her orders. We have no time to lose, said she; and opening one of the trunks, desired me to get into it, that being necessary both for her safety and mine. Fear nothing, added she; leave the management of all to me. I considered with myself that I had gone too far to recede, and obeyed her orders; when she immediately locked the trunk. This done, the eunuch her confidant called the other eunuchs who had brought in the trunks, and ordered them to carry them on board again. The lady and the eunuch re-embarked, and the boatmen rowed to Zobeide's apartment.

In the mean time I reflected very seriously upon the danger to which I had exposed myself, and made vows and prayers, though it was then too late.

The boat stopped at the palace-gate, and the trunks were carried into the apartment of the officer of the eunuchs, who keeps the key of the ladies' apartments, and suffers nothing to enter without a narrow inspection. The officer was then in bed, and it was necessary to call him up.

The officer was displeased at having his rest disturbed, and severely chid the favourite

lady for coming home so late. You shall not come off so easily as you think, said he: not one of these trunks shall pass till I have opened it. At the same time he commanded the eunuchs to bring them before him, and open them one by one. The first they took was that wherein I lay, which put me into inexpressible fear.

The favourite lady, who had the key, protested it should not be opened. You know very well, said she, I bring nothing hither but what is for the use of Zobeide, your mistress and mine. This trunk is filled with rich goods, which I purchased from some merchants lately arrived, besides a number of bottles of Zemzem water sent from Mecca; and if any of these should happen to break, the goods will be spoiled, and you must answer for them; depend upon it, Zobeide will resent your insolence. She insisted upon this in such peremptory terms, that the officer did not dare to open any of the trunks. Let them go, said he angrily; you may take them away. Upon this the door of the women's apartment was opened, and all the trunks were carried in.

This had been scarcely accomplished, when I heard the people cry, Here is the caliph! Here comes the caliph! This put me in such alarm, that I wonder I did not die upon the spot; for as they announced, it proved to be the caliph. What hast thou got in these trunks? said he to the favourite. Some stuffs, she replied, lately arrived, which the empress wishes to see. Open them, cried he, and let me see them. She excused herself, alleging the stuffs were only proper for ladies, and that by opening them, his lady would be deprived of the pleasure of seeing them first. I say open them, resumed the caliph; I will see them. She still represented that her mistress would be angry with her, if she complied: No, no, said he, I will engage she shall not say a word to you. Come, come, open them, and do not keep me waiting.

It was necessary to obey, which gave me such alarm, that I tremble every time I recollect my situation. The caliph sat down; and the favourite ordered all the trunks to be brought before him one after another. She opened some of them; and to lengthen out the time, displayed the beauties of each particular stuff, thinking in this manner to tire out his patience; but her stratagem did not succeed. Being as unwilling as myself to have the trunk where I lay opened, she left that to the last. When all the rest were

viewed, Come, said the caliph, let us see what is in that. I am at a loss to tell you whether I was dead or alive that moment; for I little thought of escaping such imminent danger.

When Zobeide's favourite saw that the caliph persisted in having this trunk opened, she said, As for this your majesty will please to dispense with seeing its contents; there are some things in it which I cannot shew you without your lady being present. Well, well, said the caliph, since that is the case, I am satisfied; order the trunks to be carried away. The words were no sooner spoken than they were moved into her chamber, where I began to revive again.

As soon as the eunuchs, who had brought them, were gone, she opened the trunk in which I was confined. Come out, said she; go up these stairs that lead to an upper room, and wait there till I come to you. The door, which led to the stairs, she locked after me; and that was no sooner done, than the caliph came and sat down on the very trunk which had been my prison. The occasion of this visit did not respect me. He wished to question the lady about what she had seen or heard in the city. So they conversed together some time: after which he left her, and retired to his apartment.

When she found her way clear, she came to the chamber where I lay concealed, and made many apologies for the alarms she had occasioned me. My uneasiness, said she, was no less than yours; of this you cannot well doubt, since I have run the same risque out of love to you. Perhaps another person in my situation would not, upon so delicate an occasion, have had presence of mind to manage so difficult a business with so much dexterity; nothing less than the love I had for you could have inspired me with courage to do what I have. But come, take heart, the danger is now over. After much tender conversation, she told me it was time to go to rest, and that she would not fail to introduce me to Zobeide her mistress, some hour on the morrow, which will be very easy, added she; for the caliph never sees her but at night. Encouraged by these words, I slept very well, or if my sleep was interrupted, it was by agreeable disquietudes, caused by the hopes of possessing a lady blest with so much wit and beauty.

The next day, before I was introduced to Zobeide, her favourite instructed me how

to conduct myself, mentioning what questions she would probably put to me, and dictating the answers I was to return. She then conducted me into a very magnificent and richly furnished hall. I had no sooner entered, than twenty female slaves, advanced in age, dressed in rich and uniform habits, came out of Zobeide's apartment, and placed themselves before the throne in two equal rows; they were followed by twenty other younger ladies, clothed after the same fashion, except that their habits appeared somewhat gayer. In the middle of these appeared Zobeide with a majestic air, and so laden with jewels, that she could scarcely walk. She ascended the throne, and the favourite lady, who had accompanied her, stood close to her right hand; the other ladies, who were slaves, being placed at some distance on each side of the throne.

As soon as the caliph's lady was seated, the slaves who came in first made a sign for me to approach. I advanced between the two rows they had formed, and prostrated myself upon the carpet that was under the princess's feet. She ordered me to rise, did me the honour to ask my name, my family, and the state of my fortune; to all which I gave her satisfactory answers, as I perceived, not only by her countenance, but by her words. I am glad, said she, that my daughter (so she used to call the favourite lady), for I look upon her as such after the care I have taken of her education, has made this choice; I approve of it, and consent to your marriage. I will myself give orders to have it solemnized; but I wish my daughter to remain with me ten days before the solemnity; in that time I will speak to the caliph, and obtain his consent: meanwhile do you remain here; you shall be taken care of.

Pursuant to the commands of the caliph's lady, I remained ten days in the women's apartments, and during that time was deprived of the pleasure of seeing the favourite lady: but was so well treated by her orders, that I had no reason to be dissatisfied.

Zobeide told the caliph her resolution of marrying the favourite lady; and the caliph leaving to her the liberty to act in the business as she thought proper, granted the favourite a considerable sum by way of settlement. When the ten days were expired, Zobeide ordered the contract of marriage to be drawn up and brought to her, and the necessary preparations being made for the solemnity, the musicians and the dancers,

both male and female, were called in, and there were great rejoicings in the palace for nine days. The tenth day being appointed for the last ceremony of the marriage, the favourite lady was conducted to a bath, and I to another. At night I had all manner of dishes served up to me, and among others, one seasoned with garlic, such as you have now forced me to eat. This I liked so well, that I scarcely touched any of the other dishes. But to my misfortune, when I rose from table, instead of washing my hands well, I only wiped them; a piece of negligence of which I had never before been guilty.

As it was then night, the whole apartment of the ladies was lighted up so as to equal the brightness of day. Nothing was to be heard through the palace but musical instruments, dances, and acclamations of joy. My bride and I were introduced into a great hall, where we were placed upon two thrones. The women who attended her made her robe herself several times, according to the usual custom on wedding days; and they shewed her to me every time she changed her habit.

All these ceremonies being over, we were conducted to the nuptial chamber: as soon as the company retired, I approached my wife; but instead of returning my transports, she pushed me away, and cried out, upon which all the ladies of the apartment came running in to enquire the cause: and for my own part, I was so thunder-struck, that I stood like a statue, without the power of even asking what she meant. Dear sister, said they to her, what has happened since we left you? Let us know, that we may try to relieve you. Take, said she, take that vile fellow out of my sight. Why, madam? I asked, wherein have I deserved your displeasure? You are a villain, said she in a furious passion, to eat garlic, and not wash your hands! Do you think I would suffer such a polluted wretch to poison me? Down with him, down with him on the ground, continued she, addressing herself to the ladies, and bring me a bastinado. They immediately did as they were desired; and while some held my hands, and others my feet, my wife, who was presently furnished with a weapon, laid on me as long as she could stand. She then said to the ladies, Take him, send him to the judge, and let the hand be cut off with which he fed upon the garlic dish.

Alas! cried I, must I be beaten unmercifully, and, to complete my affliction, have my

hand cut off, for partaking of a dish seasoned with garlic, and forgetting to wash my hands? What proportion is there between the punishment and the crime? Curse on the dish, on the cook who dressed it, and on him who served it up.

All the ladies who had seen me receive the thousand strokes took pity on me, when they heard the cutting off of my hand mentioned. Dear madam, dear sister, said they to the favourite lady, you carry your resentment too far. We own he is a man quite ignorant of the world, of your quality, and the respect that is due to you: but we beseech you to overlook and pardon his fault. I have not received adequate satisfaction, said she; I will teach him to know the world; I will make him bear sensible marks of his impertinence, and be cautious hereafter how he tastes a dish seasoned with garlic without washing his hands. They renewed their solicitations, fell down at her feet, and kissing her fair hands, said, Good madam, moderate your anger, and grant us the favour we supplicate. She made no reply, but got up, and after uttering a thousand reproaches against me, walked out of the chamber: all the ladies followed her, leaving me in inconceivable affliction.

I continued thus ten days, without seeing any body but an old female slave who brought me victuals. I asked her what was become of the favourite lady. She is sick, said the old woman; she is sick of the poisoned smell with which you infected her. Why did you not take care to wash your hands after eating of that cursed dish? Is it possible, thought I, that these ladies can be so nice, and so vindictive for such a trifling fault! I loved my wife notwithstanding all her cruelty, and could not help pitying her.

One day the old woman told me my spouse was recovered, and gone to bathe, and would come to see me the next day: So, said she, I would have you call up your patience, and endeavour to accommodate yourself to her humour. For she is in other respects a woman of good sense and discretion, and beloved by all the ladies about the court of our respected mistress Zobeide.

My wife accordingly came on the following evening, and accosted me thus: You perceive that I must possess much tenderness to you, after the affront you have offered me: but still I cannot be reconciled till I have punished you according to your demerit,









in not washing your hands after eating of the garlic dish. She then called the ladies, who, by her order, threw me upon the ground; and after binding me fast, she had the barbarity to cut off my thumbs and great toes herself, with a razor. One of the ladies applied a certain root to staunch the blood; but by the bleeding and by the pain, I swooned away.

When I came to myself, they gave me wine to drink, to recruit my strength. Ah! madam, said I to my wife, if ever I again eat of a dish with garlic in it, I solemnly swear to wash my hands a hundred and twenty times with alcali, with the ashes of the same plant, and with soap. Well, replied she, upon that condition I am willing to forget what is past, and live with you as my husband.

This, continued the Bagdad merchant, addressing himself to the company, is the reason why I refused to eat of the dish seasoned with what is now on the table.

Sir, to conclude the Bagdad merchant's story: The ladies, said he, applied to my wounds not only the root I mentioned, but likewise some balsam of Mecca, which they were well assured was not adulterated, because they had it out of the caliph's own dispensatory. By virtue of that admirable balsam, I was in a few days perfectly cured, and my wife and I lived together as agreeably as if I had never eaten of the garlic dish. But having been all my lifetime used to enjoy my liberty, I grew weary of being confined to the caliph's palace; yet I said nothing to my wife on the subject, for fear of displeasing her. However, she suspected my feelings; and eagerly wished for liberty herself, for it was gratitude alone that made her continue with Zobeide. She represented to her mistress in such lively terms the constraint I was under, in not living in the city with people of my own rank, as I had always done, that the good princess chose rather to deprive herself of the pleasure of having her favourite about her than not to grant what we both equally desired.

A month after our marriage, my wife came into my room with several eunuchs, each carrying a bag of silver. When the eunuchs were gone; You never told me, said she, that you were uneasy in being confined to court; but I perceived it, and have happily found means to make you contented. My mistress Zobeide gives us permission to quit

the palace; and here are fifty thousand sequins, of which she has made us a present, in order to enable us to live comfortably in the city. Take ten thousand of them, and go and buy us a house.

I quickly found a house for the money, and after furnishing it richly, we went to reside in it, kept a great many slaves of both sexes, and made a good figure. We thus began to live in a very agreeable manner: but my felicity was of short continuance; for at the end of a year my wife fell sick and died.

I might have married again, and lived honourably at Bagdad; but curiosity to see the world put me upon another plan. I sold my house, and after purchasing several kinds of merchandize, went with a caravan to Persia; from Persia I travelled to Samarcand, and from thence to this city.

This, said the purveyor to the sultan of Casgar, is the story that the Bagdad merchant related in a company where I was yesterday. This story, said the sultan, has something in it extraordinary; but it does not come near that of the little hunch-back. The Jewish physician prostrated himself before the sultan's throne, and addressed the prince in the following manner: Sir, if you will be so good as to hear me, I flatter myself you will be pleased with a story I have to relate. Well spoken, said the sultan; but if it be not more surprising than that of little hunch-back, you must not expect to live.

The Jewish physician finding the sultan of Casgar disposed to hear him, proceeded with the following narrative.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE JEWISH PHYSICIAN.

WHEN I was studying physic at Damascus, and was just beginning to practise in my profession with some reputation, a slave called me to see a patient in the governor of the city's family. Accordingly I went, and was conducted into a room, where I found a very handsome young man, much dejected by his disorder. I saluted him, and sat down

by him; but he made no return to my compliments, only a sign with his eyes that he heard me, and thanked me. Pray, sir, said I, give me your hand, that I may feel your pulse. But instead of stretching out his right, he gave me his left hand, at which I was extremely surprised. However, I felt his pulse,—wrote him a prescription, and took my leave.

I continued my visits for nine days, and every time I felt his pulse, he still gave me his left hand. On the tenth day he seemed to be so far recovered, that I only deemed it necessary to prescribe bathing to him. The governor of Damascus, who was by, in testimony of his satisfaction with my service, invested me with a very rich robe, saying, he had appointed me a physician of the city hospital, and physician in ordinary to his house, where I might eat at his table when I pleased.

The young man likewise shewed me many civilities, and asked me to accompany him to the bath. Accordingly we went together, and when his attendants had undressed him, I perceived he wanted the right hand, and that it had not long been cut off, which had been the occasion of his disorder, though concealed from me; for while the people about him were applying proper medicines externally, they had called me to prevent the ill consequence of the fever which was on him. I was much surprised, and concerned on seeing his misfortune; which he observed by my countenance. Doctor, cried he, do not be astonished that my hand is cut off; some day or other I will tell you the cause; and in that relation you will hear very surprising adventures.

After we had returned from the bath, we sat down to a collation; and he asked me if it would be any prejudice to his health if he took a walk out of town in the governor's garden? I made answer, that the air would be of service to him. Then, said he, if you will give me your company, I will recount to you my history. I replied, I was at his command for all that day. Upon which he called his servants, and we went to the governor's garden. Having taken two or three turns there, we seated ourselves on a carpet that his servants had spread under a tree, which gave a pleasant shade. The young man then related his history in the following terms:

I was born at Moussol, of one of the most considerable families in the city. My

father was the eldest of ten brothers, who were all alive and married when my grandfather died. All the brothers were childless, except my father; and he had no child but me. He took particular care of my education; and made me learn every thing suitable to my rank.

When I was grown up, and began to enter into the world, I happened one Friday to be at noon-prayers with my father and my uncles in the great mosque of Moussol. After prayers were over, the rest of the company going away, my father and my uncles continued sitting upon the best carpet in the mosque; and I seated myself by them. They discoursed of several things, but the conversation fell insensibly, I know not how, upon the subject of travelling. They extolled the beauties and peculiar rarities of some kingdoms, and of their principal cities. But one of my uncles said, that according to the uniform report of an infinite number of voyagers, there was not in the world a pleasanter country than Egypt, on account of the Nile; and the description he gave infused into me such high admiration, that from that moment I had a desire to travel thither. Whatever my other uncles said, by way of preference to Bagdad and the Tygris, in calling Bagdad the residence of the mussulmaun religion, and the metropolis of all the cities of the earth, made no impression upon me. My father joined in opinion with those of his brothers who had spoken in favour of Egypt; which filled me with joy. Say what you will, said he, the man that has not seen Egypt has not seen the greatest rarity in the world. All the land there is golden; I mean, it is so fertile, that it enriches its inhabitants. All the women of that country charm you by their beauty and their agreeable carriage. If you speak of the Nile, where is there a more wonderful river? What water was ever lighter or more delicious? The very slime it carries along in its overflowing fattens the fields, which produce a thousand times more than other countries that are cultivated with the greatest labour. Observe what a poet said of the Egyptians, when he was obliged to depart from Egypt: Your Nile loads you with blessings every day; it is for you alone that it runs from such a distance. Alas! in departing from you, my tears will flow as abundantly as its waters; you are to continue in the enjoyment of its delights, while I am condemned to deprive myself of them against my will.

If you look, added my father, towards the island that is formed by the two greatest branches of the Nile, what variety of verdure! What enamel of all sorts of flowers! What a prodigious number of cities, villages, canals, and a thousand other agreeable objects! If you turn your eyes to the other side, towards Ethiopia, how many other subjects of admiration! I cannot compare the verdure of so many plains, watered by the different canals of the island, better than to brilliant emeralds set in silver. Is not Grand Cairo the largest, the most populous, and the richest city in the world? What a number of magnificent edifices, both public and private! If you view the pyramids, you will be filled with astonishment at the sight of the masses of stone of an enormous thickness, which rear their heads to the skies! You will be obliged to confess, that the Pharaohs, who employed such riches, and so many men in building them, must have surpassed in magnificence and invention all the monarchs who have appeared since, not only in Egypt, but in all the world, for having left monuments so worthy of their memory: monuments so ancient, that the learned cannot agree upon the date of their erection; yet such as will last to the end of time. I pass over in silence the maritime cities of the kingdom of Egypt, such as Damietta, Rosetta, and Alexandria, where nations come for various sorts of grain, cloth, and an infinite number of commodities calculated for convenience and delight. I speak of what I know; for I spent some years there in my youth, which I shall always reckon the most agreeable part of my life.

My uncles could make no reply, and assented to all my father had said of the Nile, of Cairo, and of the whole kingdom of Egypt. My imagination was so full of these subjects, that I could not sleep that night. Soon after, my uncles declared how much they were struck with my father's account. They made a proposal to him, that they should travel all together into Egypt. To this he assented; and being rich merchants, they resolved to carry with them such commodities as were likely to suit the market. When I found that they were making preparations for their departure, I went to my father, and begged of him, with tears in my eyes, that he would suffer me to make one of the party, and allow me some stock of goods to trade with on my own account. You are too young, said he, to travel into Egypt; the fatigue is too great for you; and, besides, I am

sure you will come off a loser in your traffic. These words, however, did not suppress my eager desire to travel. I made use of my uncles' interest with my father, who at last granted me permission to go as far as Damascus, where they were to leave me, till they had travelled through Egypt. The city of Damascus, said my father, may likewise glory in its beauties, and my son must be content with leave to go so far. Though my curiosity to see Egypt was very pressing, I considered he was my father, and submitted to his will.

I set out from Moussol in company with him and my uncles. We travelled through Mesopotamia, passed the Euphrates, and arrived at Aleppo, where we staid some days. From thence we went to Damascus, the first sight of which struck me with agreeable surprise. We lodged all together in one khan; and I had the view of a city that was large, populous, full of handsome people, and well fortified. We employed some days in walking up and down the delicious gardens that surrounded it; and we all agreed, that Damascus was justly said to be seated in a paradise. At last my uncles thought of pursuing their journey; but took care, before they went, to sell my goods so advantageously for me, that I gained by them five hundred per cent. This sale brought me a sum so considerable, as to fill me with delight.

My father and my uncles left me in Damascus, and pursued their journey. After their departure, I used great caution not to lay out my money idly. But at the same time I took a stately house, built of marble, adorned with paintings of gold, silver foliage, and a garden with fine water-works. I furnished it, not so richly indeed as the magnificence of the place deserved, but at least handsomely enough for a young man of my rank. It had formerly belonged to one of the principal lords of the city; but was then the property of a rich jewel-merchant, to whom I paid for it only two sherifs a month. I had a number of domestics, and lived honourably; sometimes I gave entertainments to such people as I had made an acquaintance with, and sometimes was treated by them. Thus did I spend my time at Damascus, waiting for my father's return; no passion disturbed my repose, and my only employment was conversing with people of credit.

One day, as I sat taking the cool air at my gate, a very handsome well-dressed lady

came to me, and asked if I did not sell stuffs? She had no sooner spoken the words, than she went into my house.

When I saw that she had entered, I rose, and having shut the gate, conducted her into a hall, and asked her to sit down. Madam, said I, I have had stuffs fit to be shewn to you, but at present, I am sorry to say, I have none. She removed the veil from her face, and discovered such beauty as affected me with emotions I had never felt before. I have no occasion for stuffs, replied she, I only come to see you, and, if you please, to pass the evening in your company; all I ask of you is a light collation.

Transported with joy, I ordered the servants to bring us several sorts of fruit, and some bottles of wine. These being speedily served, we ate, drank, and made merry till midnight. In short, I had not before passed a night so agreeably as this. Next morning I would have put ten sherifs into the lady's hands, but she drew back instantly. I am not come to see you, said she, from interested motives; you therefore do me wrong. So far from receiving money from you, I must insist on your taking some from me, or else I will see you no more. In speaking this, she put her hand into her purse, took out ten sherifs, and forced me to take them, saying, You may expect me three days hence after sun-set. She then took leave of me, and I felt that when she went she carried my heart along with her.

She did not fail to return at the appointed hour three days after; and I received her with all the joy of a person who waited impatiently for her arrival. The evening and the night we spent as before; and next day at parting she promised to return the third day after. She did not, however, leave me without forcing me to take ten sherifs more.

She returned a third time; and at that interview, when we were both warm with wine, she spoke thus: My dear love, what do you think of me? Am I not handsome and agreeable? Madam, I replied, I think this an unnecessary question: the love which I shew you, ought to assure you of my admiration; I am charmed to see and to possess you. You are my queen, my sultaness; in you lies all the felicity of my life. Ah! returned she, I am sure you would speak otherwise, if you saw a certain lady of my acquaintance, who is younger and handsomer than I am. She is of such a pleasant lively temper, that

she would make the most melancholy people merry: I must bring her hither; I spoke of you to her, and from the account I have given of you, she is dying with desire to see you. She intreated me to procure her that pleasure, but I did not dare to promise her without speaking to you beforehand. Madam, said I, do what you please; but whatever you may say of your friend, I defy all her charms to tear my heart from you, to whom it is so inviolably attached, that nothing can disengage it. Be not too positive, returned she; I now tell you, I am about to put your heart to a severe trial.

We continued together all night, and next morning at parting, instead of ten sherifs she gave me fifteen, which I was forced to accept. Remember, said she, that in two days time you are to have a new guest; pray take care to give her a good reception: we will come at the usual hour. I had my hall put in great order, and a handsome collation prepared against they arrived.

I waited for the two ladies with impatience, and at last they came at the close of the day. They both unveiled, and as I had been surprised with the beauty of the first, I had reason to be much more so when I saw her friend. She had regular features, an elegant person, and such sparkling eyes, that I could hardly bear their splendour. I thanked her for the honour she did me, and entreated her to excuse me if I did not give her the reception she deserved. No compliments, replied she; it should be my part to make them to you, for allowing my friend to bring me hither. But since you are pleased to permit it, let us lay aside all ceremony, and think only of amusing ourselves.

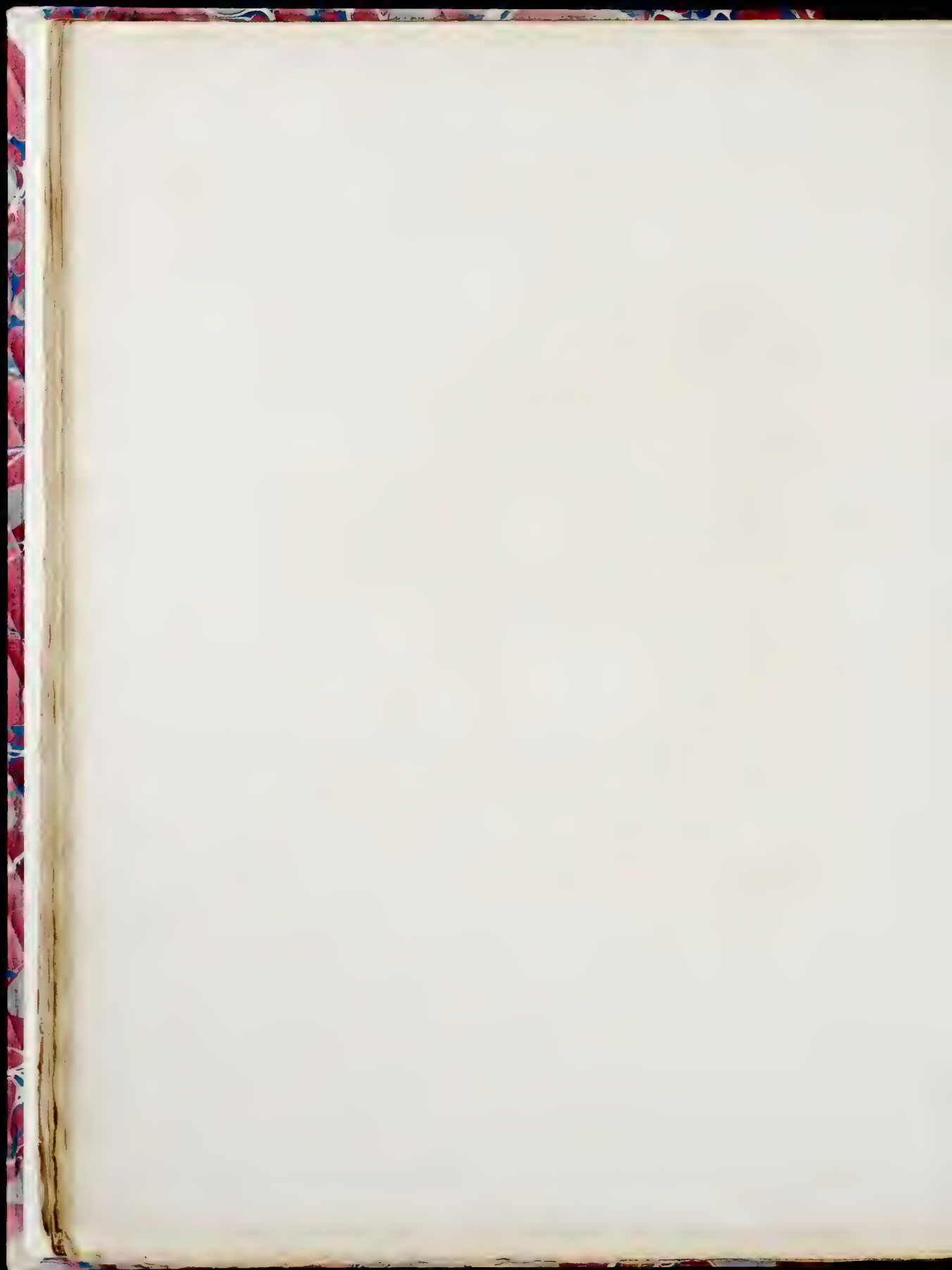
I had given orders, as soon as the ladies arrived, to have the collation served up, and we soon sat down to our entertainment. I placed myself opposite the stranger, who never ceased looking upon me with a smiling countenance. I could not resist her conquering eyes, and she made herself mistress of my heart, without opposition. But while she inspired me with a flame, she caught it herself; and so far from appearing to be under any constraint, she conversed in very free and lively language.

The other lady, who observed us, did nothing at first but laugh. I told you, said she, addressing herself to me, you would find my friend full of charms: and I perceive you









have already violated the oath you made of being faithful to me. Madam, replied I, laughing as well as she, you would have reason to complain, if I were wanting in civility to a lady whom you brought hither, and who is your intimate friend; both of you might then upbraid me for not performing duly the rites of hospitality.

We continued to drink; but as the wine warmed us, the strange lady and I ogled one another with so little reserve, that her friend grew jealous, and quickly gave us a dismal proof of the inveteracy of her feelings. She rose from the table and went out, saying, she would be with us soon: but in a few moments after, the lady who staid with me changed countenance, fell into violent convulsions, and expired in my arms, while I was calling for assistance to relieve her. I went out immediately, and enquired for the other lady; when my people told me, she had opened the street door and was gone. I then suspected what was but too true, that she had been the cause of her friend's death. She had the dexterity, and the malice, to put some very strong poison into the last glass, which she gave her with her own hand.

I was afflicted beyond measure with the accident. What shall I do? I exclaimed in agony. What will become of me? I considered there was no time to lose, and it being then moon-light, I ordered my servants to take up one of the large pieces of marble, with which the court of my house was paved, dig a hole, and there inter the corpse of the young lady. After replacing the stone, I put on a travelling suit, took what money I had; and having locked up every thing, affixed my own seal on the door of my house. This done, I went to the jewel-merchant my landlord, paid him what I owed, with a year's rent in advance; and giving him the key, requested him to keep it for me. A very urgent affair, said I, obliges me to be absent for some time; I am under the necessity of going to visit my uncles at Cairo. I took my leave of him, immediately mounted my horse, and departed with my attendants from Damascus.

I had a good journey, and arrived at Cairo without any accident. There I met my uncles, who were much surprised to see me. To excuse myself, I pretended I was tired of waiting; and hearing nothing of them, was so uneasy, that I could not be satisfied without coming to Cairo. They received me kindly, and promised that my

father should not be displeased with me for leaving Damascus without his permission. I lodged in the same khan with them, and saw all the curiosities of Cairo.

Having finished their traffic, they began to talk of returning to Moussol, and to make preparations for their departure; but I, having a wish to view in Egypt what I had not yet seen, left my uncles, and went to lodge in another quarter at a distance from their khan, and did not appear any more till they were gone. They sought for me all over the city; but not finding me, supposed remorse for having come to Egypt without my father's consent had occasioned me to return to Damascus, without saying any thing to them. So they began their journey, expecting to find me at Damascus, and there to take me up.

After their departure I continued at Cairo three years, more completely to indulge my curiosity in seeing all the wonders of Egypt. During that time I took care to remit money to the jewel-merchant, ordering him to keep my house for me; for I designed to return to Damascus, and reside there some years longer. I had no adventure at Cairo worth relating; but doubtless you will be much surprised at that which befell me on my return to Damascus.

Arriving at this city, I went to the jewel-merchant's, who received me joyfully, and would accompany me to my house, to shew me that no one had entered it whilst I was absent. The seal was still entire upon the lock; and when I went in, I found every thing in the order in which I had left it.

In sweeping and cleaning out the hall where I had eaten with the ladies, one of my servants found a gold chain necklace, with ten very large and perfect pearls strung upon it at certain distances. He brought it to me, when I knew it to be the same I had seen upon the lady's neck who was poisoned; and concluded it had broken off and fallen. I could not look upon it without shedding tears, when I called to mind the lovely creature I had seen die in such a shocking manner. I wrapt it up, and put it in my bosom.

I rested some days to recover from the fatigues of my journey; after which, I began to visit my former acquaintance. I abandoned myself to every species of pleasure, and gradually squandered away all my money. Being thus reduced, instead of selling my

furniture, I resolved to part with the necklace; but I had so little skill in pearls, that I took my measures very ill, as you shall hear.

I went to the bezestein, where I called a crier aside, and shewing him the necklace, told him I wished to sell it, and desired him to shew it to the principal jewellers. The crier was surprised to see such a valuable ornament. How beautiful, exclaimed he, gazing upon it with admiration; never did our merchants see any thing so rich; I am sure I shall oblige them highly in shewing it to them; and you need not doubt they will set a high price upon it, in emulation of each other. He took me to a shop which proved to be my landlord's: Stop here, said the crier, I will soon return and bring you an answer.

While he was running about to shew the necklace, I sat with the jeweller, who was glad to see me, and we conversed on different subjects. The crier returned, and calling me aside, instead of telling me the necklace was valued at two thousand sherifs, assured me nobody would give me more than fifty. The reason is, added he, the pearls are false; consider if you will part with it at that price. I took him at his word, wanting money. Go, said I, I take your word, and that of persons who know better than myself; deliver it to them, and bring me the money immediately.

The crier had been ordered to offer me fifty sherifs by one of the richest jewellers in town, who had only made that offer to sound me, and try if I was well acquainted with the value of the pearls. He had no sooner received my answer, than he took the crier to the judge, and shewing him the necklace; Sir, said he, here is a necklace which was stolen from me, and the thief, under the character of a merchant, has had the impudence to offer it to sale, and is at this minute in the bezestein. He is willing to take fifty sherifs for a necklace that is worth two thousand, which is a clear proof of his having stolen it.

The judge sent immediately to seize me; and when I came before him, he asked me if the necklace he had in his hand was not the same that I had exposed to sale in the bezestein. I told him it was. Is it true, demanded he, that you are willing to sell it for fifty sherifs? I answered I was. Well, continued he, in a scoffing way, give him the bastinado; he will quickly confess, notwithstanding his merchant's disguise, that he is only

an artful thief; let him be beaten till he owns his guilt. The pain of the torture made me tell a lie; I confessed, though it was not true, that I had stolen the necklace; and the judge ordered my hand to be cut off, according to the sentence of our law.

This made a great noise in the bezestein, and I was scarcely returned to my house when my landlord came. My son, said he, you seem to be a young man well educated, and of good sense; how is it possible you could be guilty of such an unworthy action, as that I hear you charged with? You gave me an account of your property yourself, and I do not doubt but the account was just. Why did not you request money of me, and I would have lent you some? However, after what has happened, I cannot allow you to remain longer in my house; you must seek for other lodgings. I was extremely troubled at this; and entreated the jeweller, with tears in my eyes, to let me stay three days longer; which he granted.

Alas, thought I, this misfortune and affront are unsufferable; how shall I dare to return to Moussol? Nothing I can say to my father will persuade him that I am innocent.

Three hours after this fatal accident my house was forcibly entered by the judge's officers, accompanied by my landlord, and the merchant who had falsely accused me of having stolen the necklace. I asked them, what brought them there? But instead of giving me any answer, they bound and gagged me, calling me a thousand abusive names, and telling me the necklace belonged to the governor of Damascus, who had lost it above three years before, and that one of his daughters had not been heard of since. Judge of my sensations when I heard this intelligence. However, I summoned all my resolution; I will, thought I, tell the governor the truth; and it will rest with him either to put me to death, or to protect my innocence.

When I was brought before him, I observed he looked upon me with an eye of compassion, from whence I augured well. He ordered me to be untied, and addressing himself to the jeweller, who accused me, and to my landlord: Is this the man, asked he, that sold the pearl necklace? They had no sooner answered in the affirmative, than he continued, I am sure he did not steal the necklace, and I am much astonished at the injustice that has been done him. These words giving me courage: I said, Sir, I do

assure you I am perfectly innocent. I am likewise fully persuaded the necklace never did belong to my accuser, whom I never saw, and whose horrible perfidy is the cause of my unjust treatment. It is true, I made a confession as if I had stolen it: but this I did contrary to my conscience, through the force of torture, and for another reason that I am ready to give you, if you will have the goodness to hear me. I know enough of it already, replied the governor, to do you one part of the justice to which you are entitled. Take from hence, continued he, the false accuser; let him undergo the same punishment as he caused to be inflicted on this young man, whose innocence is known to myself.

The governor's orders were immediately put in execution; the jeweller was punished as he deserved. Then the governor, having ordered all present to withdraw, said to me: My son, tell me without fear how this necklace fell into your hands, conceal nothing from me. I related plainly all that had passed, and declared I had chosen rather to pass for a thief than to reveal that tragical adventure. Good God, exclaimed the governor, thy judgments are incomprehensible, and we ought to submit to them without murmuring. I receive, with entire submission, the stroke thou hast been pleased to inflict upon me. Then directing his discourse to me: My son, said he, having now heard the cause of your disgrace, for which I am truly concerned, I will give you an account of the affliction which has befallen myself. Know then, that I am the father of both the young ladies you were speaking of.

The first lady, who had the impudence to come to your house, was my eldest daughter. I had given her in marriage at Cairo to one of her cousins, my brother's son. Her husband died, and she returned home corrupted by every vice too often contracted in Egypt. Before I took her home, her younger sister, who died in that deplorable manner in your arms, was a truly virtuous girl, and had never given me any occasion to complain of her conduct. But after that, the elder sister became very intimate with her, and insensibly made her as wicked as herself.

The day after the death of the younger, not finding her at home, I asked her elder sister what was become of her; but she, instead of answering, affected to weep bitterly; from whence I formed a fatal presage. I pressed her to inform me of what she knew

respecting her sister. Father, replied she, sobbing, I can tell you no more than that my sister put on yesterday her richest dress, with her valuable pearl necklace, went out, and has not been heard of since. I searched for her all over the town, but could learn nothing of her unhappy fate. In the mean time the elder, who doubtless repented of her jealous fury, became melancholy, and incessantly bewailed the death of her sister; she denied herself all manner of food, and so put an end to her deplorable life.

Such, continued the governor, is the condition of mankind! such are the misfortunes to which we are exposed! However, my son, added he, since we are both of us equally unfortunate, let us unite our sorrow, and not abandon one another. I will give you in marriage a third daughter I have still left; she is younger than her sisters, and in no respect imitates their conduct; besides, she is handsomer, and I assure you is of a disposition calculated to make you happy. You shall have no other house but mine, and, after my death, you and she shall be heirs to all my property.

My lord, I replied, I am overcome by your favours, and shall never be able to make a sufficient acknowledgment. Enough, said he, interrupting me, let us not waste time in idle words. He then called for witnesses, ordered the contract of marriage to be drawn, and I became the husband of his third daughter.

He was not satisfied with punishing the jeweller, who had falsely accused me, but confiscated for my use all his property, which was very considerable. As for the rest, since you have been called to the governor's house, you may have seen what respect they pay me there. I must tell you further, that a person dispatched by my uncles to Egypt, on purpose to inquire for me there, passing through this city found me out last night, and delivered me a letter from them. They inform me of my father's death, and invite me to come and take possession of his property at Moussol. But as the alliance and friendship of the governor have fixed me here, and will not suffer me to leave him, I have sent back the express with a power, which will secure to me my inheritance. After what you have heard, I hope you will pardon my seeming incivility during the course of my illness, in giving you my left instead of my right hand.

This, said the Jewish physician, is the story I heard from the young man of Moussol.

I continued at Damascus as long as the governor lived; after his death, being still in the vigour of my age, I had the curiosity to travel. Accordingly I went through Persia to the Indies, and came at last to settle in this your capital, where I have practised physic with reputation.

The sultan of Casgar was well pleased with this story. I must confess, said he to the Jew, the story you have told me is very singular; but I declare freely, that of the little hunch-back is yet more extraordinary, and much more diverting; so you are not to expect that I will give you your life, any more than the others. I will have you all four executed. Pray, sir, stay a minute, said the tailor, advancing, and prostrating himself at the sultan's feet. Since your majesty loves pleasant stories, I have one to tell you that will not displease you. Well, I will hear thee too, said the sultan; but do not flatter thyself that I will suffer thee to live, unless thou tellest me some adventure that is yet more diverting than that of my hunch-backed jester. Upon this the tailor, as if he had been sure of success, spoke boldly to the following purpose:

THE STORY TOLD BY THE TAILOR.

A CITIZEN of this city did me the honour two days ago to invite me to an entertainment, which he was to give to his friends yesterday morning. Accordingly I went early, and found there about twenty persons.

The master of the house was gone out upon some business, but in a short time returned, and brought with him a young man, a stranger, very well dressed, and handsome, but lame. When he entered, we all rose, and out of respect to the master of the house, invited the young man to sit down with us upon the estrade. He was going to comply; but suddenly perceiving a barber in our company, flew backwards, and made towards the door. The master of the house, surprised at his behaviour, stopped him. Where are you going? demanded he. I bring you along with me to do me the honour of

being my guest among the rest of my friends, and you are no sooner got into my house, than you are for running away. Sir, replied the young man, for God's sake do not stop me, let me go, I cannot without horror look upon that abominable barber, who, though he was born in a country where all the natives are white, resembles an Ethiopian; and his soul is yet blacker and more horrible than his face.

We were all surprised to hear the young man speak in this manner, and began to have a very bad opinion of the barber, without knowing what ground the young man had for what he said. Nay, we protested we would not suffer any one to remain in our company, who bore so horrid a character. The master of the house intreated the stranger to tell us what reason he had for hating the barber. Gentlemen, resumed the young man, you must know this cursed barber is the cause of my being lame, and having fallen into the most ridiculous situation you can imagine. For this reason I have sworn to avoid all the places where he is, and even not to stay in the cities where he resides. It was for this reason that I left Bagdad, where he then dwelt; and travelled so far to settle in this city, at the extremity of Tartary; a place where I flattered myself I should never see him. And now, after all, contrary to my expectation, I find him here. This obliges me, gentlemen, against my will, to deprive myself of the honour of being merry with you. This very day I shall take leave of your town, and go, if I can, to hide my head where he cannot come. This said, he would have left us, but the master of the house earnestly intreated him to stay, and tell us the cause of his aversion to the barber, who all this while looked down and said not a word. We joined with the master of the house in his request; and at last the young man, yielding to our importunities, sat down; and, after turning his back on the barber, that he might not see him, gave us the following narrative of his adventures.

My father's quality might have entitled him to the highest posts in the city of Bagdad, but he always preferred a quiet life to the honours of a public station. I was his only child, and when he died I had finished my education, and was of age to dispose of the plentiful fortune he had left me; which I did not squander away foolishly, but applied to such uses as obtained for me every body's respect.

I had not yet been disturbed by any passion: I was so far from being sensible of love, that I bashfully avoided the conversation of women. One day, walking in the streets, I saw a large party of ladies before me; and that I might not meet them, I turned down a narrow lane, and sat down upon a bench by a door. I was placed opposite a window, where stood a pot of beautiful flowers, on which I had my eyes fixed, when the window opened, and a young lady appeared, whose beauty struck me. Immediately she fixed her eyes upon me; and in watering the flower-pot with a hand whiter than alabaster, looked at me with a smile, that inspired me with as much love for her as I had formerly aversion for all the sex. After having watered her flowers, and darted at me a glance full of charms that pierced my heart, she shut the window, and left me in inconceivable perplexity, from which I should not have recovered, if a noise in the street had not brought me to myself. I lifted up my head, and turning, saw the first cauze of the city, mounted on a mule, and attended by five or six servants: he alighted at the door of the house, where the young lady had opened the window, and went in; from whence I concluded he was her father.

I went home in an altered state of mind; agitated by a passion the more violent, as I had never felt its assaults before: I retired to bed in a violent fever, at which all the family were much concerned. My relations, who had a great affection for me, were so alarmed by the sudden disorder, that they importuned me to tell the cause; which I took care not to discover. My silence created an uneasiness that the physicians could not dispel, because they knew nothing of my distemper, and by their medicines rather inflamed than checked it.

My relations began to despair of my life, when an old lady of our acquaintance, hearing I was ill, came to see me. She viewed me with great attention, and after having examined me, penetrated, I know not how, into the real cause of my illness. She took my relations aside, and desired all my people would retire out of the room, and leave her with me alone.

When the room was clear, she sat down on the side of my bed. My son, said she, you have obstinately concealed the cause of your illness; but you have no occasion to

reveal it to me. I have experience enough to penetrate into a secret; you will not deny when I tell you it is love that makes you sick. I can find a way to cure you, if you will but inform me who that happy lady is, that could move a heart so insensible as yours; for you have the character of a woman-hater, and I was not the last who perceived that such was your disposition; but what I foresaw has come to pass, and I am now glad of the opportunity to employ my talents in relieving your pain.

The old lady having thus spoken, paused, expecting my answer; but though what she had said had made a strong impression upon me, I durst not lay open to her the bottom of my heart; I only turned to her, and heaved a deep sigh, without replying a word. Is it bashfulness, said she, that keeps you silent? Or is it want of confidence in me? Do you doubt the effect of my promise? I could mention to you a number of young men of your acquaintance, who have been in the same condition with yourself, and have received relief from me.

The good lady told me so many more circumstances that I broke silence, declared to her my complaint, pointed out to her the place where I had seen the object which occasioned it, and unravelled all the circumstances of my adventure. If you succeed, added I, and procure me the happiness of seeing that charming beauty, and revealing to her the passion with which I burn for her, you may depend upon it I will be grateful. My son, replied the old woman, I know the lady you speak of; she is, as you rightly judged, the daughter of the first cauzee of this city: I am not surprised that you are in love with her. She is the handsomest and most lovely lady in Bagdad, but very proud, and of difficult access. You know how strict our judges are, in enjoining the punctual observance of the severe laws that confine women; and they are yet more strict in the observation of them in their own families; the cauzee you saw is more rigid in that point than any of the other magistrates. They are always preaching to their daughters what a heinous crime it is to shew themselves to men; and the girls themselves are so prepossessed with the notion, that they make no other use of their own eyes but to conduct them along the street, when necessity obliges them to go abroad. I do not say absolutely that the first cauzee's daughter is of that humour; but that does not prevent my fearing to meet with

as great obstacles on her side, as on her father's. Would to God you had loved any other, then I should not have had so many difficulties to surmount. However, I will employ all my art to compass the matter; but it requires time. In the mean while take courage and trust to me.

The old woman took her leave; and as I weighed within myself all the obstacles she had been talking of, the fear of her not succeeding in her undertaking inflamed my disorder. Next day she came again, and I read in her countenance that she had no favourable news to impart. She spoke thus: My son, I was not mistaken; I have somewhat else to conquer besides the vigilance of a father. You love an insensible object, who takes pleasure in making every one miserable who suffers himself to be charmed by her; she will not deign them the least comfort: she heard me with pleasure, when I spoke of nothing but the torment she made you endure; but I no sooner opened my mouth to engage her to allow you to see her, and converse with her, but casting at me a terrible look, You are very presumptuous, said she, to make such a proposal; I charge you never to insult me again with such language.

Do not let this cast you down, continued she; I am not easily disheartened, and am not without hope that I shall succeed. To shorten my story, said the young man, this good woman made several fruitless attacks in my behalf on the proud enemy of my rest. The vexation I suffered inflamed my distemper to that degree, that my physicians gave me over. I was considered as a dead man, when the old woman came to recall me to life.

That no one might hear what was said, she whispered in my ear; Remember the present you owe for the good news I bring you. These words produced a marvellous effect; I raised myself up in the bed, and with transport replied, You shall not go without a present; but what is the news you bring me? Dear sir, said she, you shall not die; I shall speedily have the pleasure to see you in perfect health, and very well satisfied with me. Yesterday I went to see the lady you love, and found her in good humour. As soon as I entered, I put on a sad countenance, heaved many deep sighs, and began to squeeze out some tears. My good mother, demanded she, what is the matter with you,

why are you so cast down? Alas, my dear and honourable lady, I replied, I have just been with the young gentleman of whom I spoke to you the other day, who is dying on your account. I am at a loss to know, said she, how you make me to be the cause of his death. How can I have contributed to it? How, replied I, did not you tell me the other day, that he sat down before your window when you opened it to water your flower-pot? He then saw that prodigy of beauty, those charms that your mirror daily presents to you. From that moment he languished, and his disorder has so increased, that he is reduced to the deplorable condition I have mentioned. You well remember, added I, how harshly you treated me at our last interview; when I was speaking to you of his illness, and proposing a way to save him from the threatened consequences of his complaint. After I left you I went directly to his house, and he no sooner learnt from my countenance that I had brought no favourable answer than his disorder increased. From that time he has been at the point of death; and I doubt whether your compassion would not now come too late to save his life. The fear of your death alarmed her, and I saw her face change colour. Is your account true? she asked. Has he actually no other disorder than what is occasioned by his love of me? Ah, madam! I replied, it is too true; would it were otherwise! Do you believe, said she, that the hopes of seeing me would at all contribute to rescue him from his danger? I answered, Perhaps it may, and if you will permit me, I will try the experiment. Well, resumed she, sighing, give him hopes of seeing me; but he must aspire to no other favours, unless to marry me, and obtains my father's consent. Madam, I replied, your goodness overcomes me: I will instantly seek the young gentleman, and tell him he is to have the pleasure of an interview with you. The best opportunity I can think of, said she, for granting him that favour, will be next Friday at the hour of noon-prayers. Let him observe when my father goes out, and then, if his health permit him to be abroad, come and place himself opposite the house. I shall then see him from my window, and will come down and open the door: we will converse together during prayer-time; but he must depart before my father returns.

It is now Tuesday, continued the old lady; you have the interval between this and Friday to recover your strength, and make the necessary dispositions for the interview

While the good old lady was speaking, I felt my illness decrease, or rather, by the time she had done, I found myself perfectly recovered. Here, take this, said I, reaching out to her my purse, which was full, it is to you alone that I owe my cure. I reckon this money better employed than all that I gave the physicians, who have only tormented me during my illness.

When the lady was gone, I found I had strength enough to get up: and my relations finding me so well, complimented me on the occasion, and went home.

On Friday morning the old woman came, just as I was dressing, and choosing out the richest clothes in my wardrobe, said, I do not ask you how you are, what you are doing is intimation enough of your health; but will not you bathe before you go? That will take up too much time, I replied; I will content myself with sending for a barber, to shave my head. Immediately I ordered one of my slaves to call a barber that could do his business cleverly and expeditiously.

The slave brought me the wretch you see here, who came, and after saluting me, said, Sir, you look as if you were not well. I told him I was just recovered from a fit of sickness. May God, resumed he, deliver you from all mischance; may his grace always attend you. I hope he will grant your wish, for which I am obliged to you. Since you are recovering from a fit of sickness, he continued, I pray God preserve your health; but now let me know what I am to do; I have brought my razors and my lancets, do you desire to be shaved or to be bled? I replied, I am just recovered from a fit of sickness, and you may readily judge I only want to be shaved: come, do not lose time in prattling; for I am in haste, and have an appointment precisely at noon.

The barber spent much time in opening his case, and preparing his razors. Instead of putting water into the bason, he took a very handsome astrolabe out of his case, and went very gravely out of my room to the middle of the court to take the height of the sun: he returned with the same grave pace, and entering my room, said, Sir, you will be pleased to know this day is Friday the 18th of the moon Suffir, in the year 653, from the retreat of our great prophet from Mecca to Medina, and in the year 7320 of the epocha of the great Iskender with two horns; and that the conjunction of Mars and Mercury

signifies you cannot choose a better time than this very day and hour for being shaved. But, on the other hand, the same conjunction is a bad presage to you. I learn from it, that this day you run a great risque, not indeed of losing your life, but of an inconvenience which will attend you while you live. You are obliged to me for the advice I now give you, to avoid this accident; I shall be sorry if it befall you.

You may guess, gentlemen, how vexed I was at having fallen into the hands of such a prattling impertinent fellow; what an unseasonable adventure was it for a lover preparing for an interview with his mistress! I was quite irritated. I care not, said I, in anger, for your advice and predictions; I did not call you to consult your astrology; you came hither to shave me; shave me, or begone. I will call another barber, sir, replied he, with a coolness that put me out of all patience; what reason have you to be angry with me? You do not know, that all of my profession are not like me; and that if you made it your business to search, you would not find such another. You only sent for a barber; but here, in my person, you have the best barber in Bagdad, an experienced physician, a profound chemist, an infallible astrologer, a finished grammarian, a complete orator, a subtile logician, a mathematician perfectly well versed in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and all the refinements of algebra; an historian fully master of the annals of all the kingdoms of the universe. Besides, I understand all branches of philosophy. I have all our sacred traditions by heart. I am a poet; I am an architect; and what is it I am not? There is nothing in nature hidden from me. Your deceased father, to whose memory I pay a tribute of tears every time I think of him, was fully convinced of my merit; he was fond of me, and spoke of me in all companies as the first man in the world. Out of gratitude and friendship for him, I am willing to attach myself to you, to take you under my protection, and guard you from all the evils that your stars may threaten.

When I heard all this jargon, I could not forbear laughing, notwithstanding my anger. You impertinent prattler! said I, will you have done, and begin to shave me?

Sir, replied the barber, you affront me in calling me a prattler; on the contrary, all the world gives me the honourable title of Silent. I had six brothers, whom you might

justly have called prattlers. These indeed were impertinent chatterers, but for me, who am a younger brother, I am grave and concise in my discourse.

Fancy yourselves, gentlemen, in my place! What could I say, when I saw myself so cruelly delayed? Give him three pieces of gold, said I to the slave who was my house-keeper, and send this fellow away, that he may disturb me no more; I will not be shaved this day. Sir, said the barber, pray what do you mean? I did not come to seek for you, but you sent for me; and as that is the case, I swear by the faith of a Moosulmaun, I will not stir out of these doors till I have shaved you. If you do not know my value, it is not my fault. Your deceased father did me more justice. Every time he sent for me to let him blood, he made me sit down by him, and was charmed with hearing the witty things I spoke. I kept him in a continual strain of admiration; I elevated him; and when I had finished my discourse, My God, he would exclaim, you are an inexhaustible source of science, no man can reach the depth of your knowledge. My dear sir, I would answer, you do me more honour than I deserve. If I say any thing that is worth hearing, it is owing to the favourable audience you vouchsafe me; it is your liberality that inspires me with the sublime thoughts which have the happiness to please you. One day, when he was charmed with an admirable discourse I had made him, he said, Give him a hundred pieces of gold, and invest him with one of my richest robes. I instantly received the present. I then drew his horoscope, and found it the happiest in the world. Nay, I carried my gratitude further; I let him blood with cupping-glasses.

This was not all; the barber spun out another harangue that was a full half hour long. Tired with hearing him, and fretted at the loss of time, which was almost spent before I was half ready, I did not know what to say. It is impossible, I exclaimed, there should be such another man in the world who takes pleasure, as you do, in making people mad.

I thought I might perhaps succeed better, if I dealt mildly with him. In the name of God, said I, leave off talking, and shave me directly; business of the last importance calls me, as I have already told you. At these words he fell a laughing: It would be fortunate, said he, if our minds were always in the same state; if we were always wise and prudent. I am willing, however, to believe, that if you are angry with me, it is your

disorder that has caused the change in your temper, for which reason you stand in need of some instructions, and you cannot do better than follow the example of your father and grandfather. They came and consulted me upon all occasions, and I can say, without vanity, that they always highly prized my advice. Pray observe, sir, men never succeed in their undertakings without the counsel of persons of understanding. A man cannot, says the proverb, be wise without receiving advice from the wise. I am entirely at your service, and you have only to command me.

What! cannot I prevail with you then, I demanded, interrupting him, to leave off these long speeches, that tend to nothing but to distract my head, and detain me from my business? Shave me, I say, or begone: with that I started up in anger, stamping my foot against the ground.

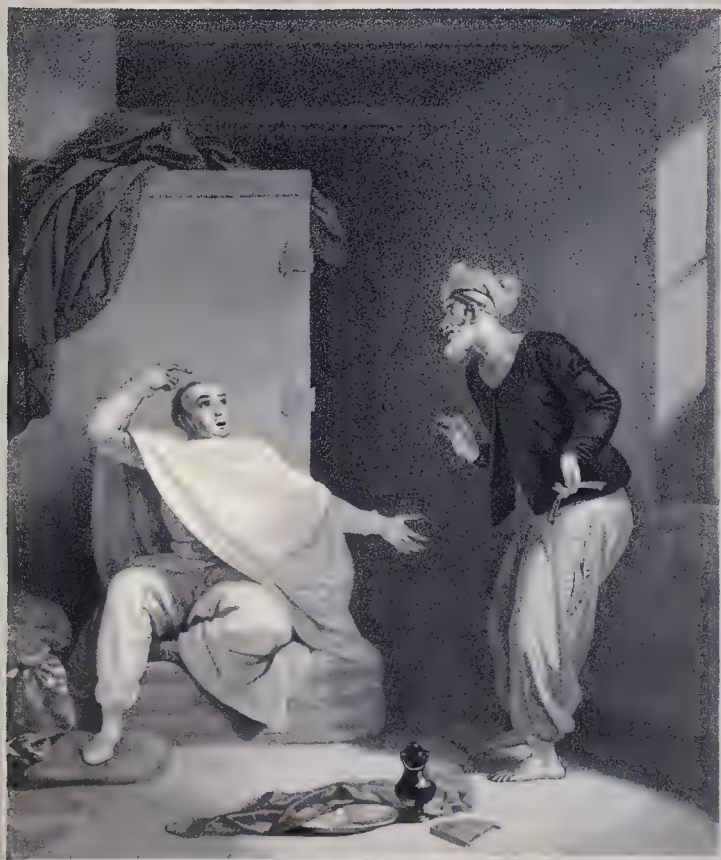
When he saw I was in earnest, he said, Sir, do not be angry, we are going to begin. He lathered my head, and began to shave me: but had not given four strokes with his razor before he stopped, and addressed me, Sir, you are hasty, you should avoid these transports that only come from the devil. I am entitled to some consideration on account of my age, my knowledge, and my great virtues.

Go on and shave me, said I, interrupting him again, and talk no more. That is to say, replied he, you have some urgent business to transact? I will lay you a wager I guess right. Why I told you two hours ago, I returned; you ought to have shaved me before. Moderate your passion, replied he, perhaps you have not maturely weighed what you are going to do; when things are done precipitately, they are generally repented of. I wish you would tell me what mighty business this is you are so earnest about. I would tell you my opinion of it; besides, you have time enough, since your appointment is not till noon, and it wants three hours of that yet. I do not mind that, said I; persons of honour and of their word are rather before their time than after. But I forget that by reasoning with you, I give into the fault of you prattling barbers; have done, have done; and shave me.

The more haste I was in, the less speed he made. He laid down the razor, and took up his astrolabe; then laid down his astrolabe, and took up his razor again. He then







THE TWO MEN

By J. H. P. H. H. H.



quitted his razor again, and took up his astrolabe a second time; and so left me half shaved, to go and see precisely what hour it was. Back he came, and exclaimed, Sir, I knew I was not mistaken, it wants three hours of noon. I am sure of it, or else all the rules of astronomy are false. Just heaven! cried I, my patience is exhausted, I can bear this no longer. You cursed barber, you barber of mischief, I can scarcely forbear falling upon you and strangling you. Softly, sir, said he, very calmly, without being moved by my anger: Are you not afraid of a relapse? Be not in a passion, I am going to shave you this minute. In speaking these words, he clapped his astrolabe in his case, took up his razor, and passing it over the strap which was fixed to his belt, fell to shaving me again; but all the while he was thus employed, the dog could not forbear prattling. If you would be pleased, sir, said he, to tell me what the business is you are going about at noon, I could give you some advice that might be of use to you. To satisfy the fellow, I told him I was going to meet some friends at an entertainment, to make merry with me on the recovery of my health.

When the barber heard me talk of feasting; God bless you this day, as well as all other days! he cried: You put me in mind that yesterday I invited four or five friends to come and eat with me this day; indeed I had forgotten the engagement, and have made no preparation for them. Do not let that trouble you, said I; though I dine abroad, my larder is always well furnished. I make you a present of all that it contains; and besides, I will order you as much wine as you have occasion for, I have some of excellent quality in my cellar; only you must hasten to finish shaving me: and, pray, remember, that as my father made you presents to encourage you to speak, I give you mine to induce you to be silent.

He was not satisfied with my promise, but exclaimed, God reward you, sir, for your kindness: pray shew me these provisions now, that I may see if there will be enough to entertain my friends. I would have them satisfied with the fare I provide for them. I have, said I, a lamb, six capons, a dozen chickens, and enough to furnish four courses. I ordered a slave to bring all before him, with four great pitchers of wine. This is all very well, returned the barber; but we shall want fruit, and sauce for the meat. These

I ordered likewise; but then he left off shaving, to look over every article one after another; and this survey lasted almost half an hour. I raged and stormed like a madman; but it signified nothing, the wretch made no more haste. However, he took up his razor again, and shaved me for some minutes; then stopping suddenly, exclaimed, I could not have believed, sir, that you would have been so liberal; I begin to perceive that your deceased father lives again in you. Most certainly, I do not deserve the favours with which you have loaded me; and I assure you I shall bear them in perpetual remembrance; for, sir, to let you know, I have nothing but what I obtain from the generosity of such gentlemen as you: in which respect, I am like to Zantout, who rubs the people in the baths; to Sah, who cries boiled peas in the streets; to Salout, who sells beans; to Akerscha, who sells greens; to Aboumearez, who sprinkles the streets to lay the dust; and to Cassem, the caliph's life-guard man. Of all these persons, not one is disposed to be melancholy; they are neither impertinent nor quarrelsome; they are more contented with their lot, than the caliph in the midst of his court; they are always gay, ready to sing and dance, and have each of them their peculiar song and dance, with which they divert the city of Bagdad; but what I esteem most in them is, that they are no great talkers, any more than your slave, that has now the honour to speak to you. Here, sir, is the song and dance of Zantout, who rubs the people in the baths; mind me, pray, and see if I do not imitate it exactly.

The barber immediately sung the song, and danced the dance of Zantout; and in spite of all I could say to induce him to finish his buffooneries, he did not cease till he had imitated, in like manner, the songs and dances of the other persons he had named. After he had concluded, I am going, said he, addressing himself to me, to invite all these honest men to my house; if you will take my advice, you will join us, and disappoint your friends, who perhaps are great talkers. They will only tease you to death with their impertinent discourse, and make you relapse into a disorder worse than that from which you are so lately recovered; whereas at my house you shall have nothing but pleasure.

Notwithstanding my anger, I could not forbear laughing at the fellow's impertinence.

I wish I had no business upon my hands, I replied, I would accept your invitation with all my heart, and partake of your entertainment; but I beg to be excused, I am too much engaged; another day I shall be more at leisure, and then we will make up the same party. Come, finish shaving me, and make haste home; perhaps your friends are already arrived at your house. Sir, replied he, do not refuse me the favour I ask; were you but once in our company, it would afford you so much pleasure as abundantly to compensate you for forsaking your friends. Let us talk no more of that, said I; I cannot be your guest.

I found I gained no ground by mild terms. Since you will not come to my house, replied the barber, you must allow me to go with you: I will carry these things home, and my friends may eat of them if they like, and I will return immediately: I would not be so uncivil as to leave you alone. You deserve this piece of civility at my hands. Heavens! cried I, then I shall not get clear of this troublesome fellow to-day. In the name of the living God, leave off your senseless jargon; go to your friends, drink, eat, and be merry with them, and leave me at liberty to go to mine. I must go alone, I have no occasion for company; besides, I must needs tell you, the place to which I go is one where you cannot be received. You jest, sir, said he; if your friends have invited you to a feast, what should prevent you from allowing me to go with you? You will please them, I am sure, by introducing to them a man who can talk so wittily, and knows how to divert company. But say what you will, I am determined to attend you.

These words, gentlemen, perplexed me much. How, thought I, shall I get rid of this cursed barber? If I persist in contradicting him, we shall never have done.

Besides, I heard at this instant the first call to noon-prayers, and it was time for me to set out. I now resolved to say nothing, and to make as if I consented to his accompanying me. He then finished shaving me, and I said to him, Take some of my servants to carry these provisions along with you, and return hither; I will stay for you, and shall not go without you.

At last he went, and I dressed myself as expeditiously as I could. I heard the last call to prayers, and hastened to set out; but the malicious barber, who guessed my

intention, went with my servants only within sight of the house, and stood there till he saw them enter, after which he concealed himself at the corner of the street, with an intent to observe and follow me. When I arrived at the cauzee's door, I looked back and saw him at the head of the street, which alarmed me to the last degree.

The cauzee's door was half open, and as I entered I saw an old woman waiting for me, who, after she had shut the door, conducted me to the chamber of the young lady who was the object of my love; but we had scarcely begun to converse, when we heard a noise in the streets. The young lady put her head to the window, and saw through the gate that it was her father already returning from prayers. At the same time I looked, and saw the barber sitting over-against the house, on the bench from which I had first beheld the young lady.

I had then two things to fear, the arrival of the cauzee, and the presence of the barber. The young lady mitigated my apprehension on the first head, by assuring me the cauzee came but seldom to her chamber, and as she had foreseen that this misadventure might happen, she had contrived a way to convey me out safe: but the indiscretion of the accursed barber made me very uneasy; and you shall hear that my uneasiness was not without reason.

As soon as the cauzee was come in, he caned one of his slaves who had deserved chastisement. The slave made a horrid noise, which was heard in the streets; the barber thought they proceeded from me, and that I was maltreated. Filled with this idea, he roared out aloud, rent his clothes, threw dust upon his head, and called the neighbourhood to his assistance. The neighbours collected, and asked what assistance he wanted? Alas! cried he, they are assassinating my master, my dear patron; and without saying any thing more, he ran all the way to my house, with the very same cry in his mouth. From thence he returned, followed by all my domestics armed with sticks. They knocked with inconceivable fury at the door, and the cauzee sent a slave to see what was the matter; but the slave being frightened, returned to his master, crying, Sir, above ten thousand men are going to break into your house by force.

Immediately the cauzee himself ran, opened the door, and asked what they wanted.

His venerable presence could not inspire them with respect. They insolently said to him, You cursed cauzee, what reason have you to assassinate our master? What has he done to you? Good people, replied the magistrate, for what should I assassinate your master, whom I do not know, and who has done me no harm; my house is open to you, come and search. You bastinadoed him, said the barber; I heard his cries not a minute ago. What harm could your master do to me, replied the cauzee, to oblige me to inflict such chastisement? Is he in my house? If he is, how came he in, or who could have introduced him? O thou vile cauzee, cried the barber, you and your long beard shall never make me believe you. I know your daughter is in love with our master, and appointed him a meeting during the time of noon prayer; you without doubt have had notice of it, returned home, and surprised him, and made your slaves bastinado him: but this wicked action shall not pass with impunity; the caliph shall be acquainted with it, and he will give equitable and summary justice. Let him come out, deliver him to us immediately; or we will enter and take him out to your shame. There is no occasion for so many words, replied the cauzee, nor to make so great a noise: if what you say is true, go and find him, I give you full permission. Upon this the barber and my domestics rushed into the house like furies, and sought for me in every direction.

As I overheard all that the barber said to the cauzee, I sought for a place to conceal myself, and could find nothing but a large empty trunk, in which I lay down, and shut it upon me. The barber, after he had searched every where, came into the chamber where I was, and opened the trunk. As soon as he saw me, he took it upon his head and carried it away. He descended a high staircase into a court, which he crossed hastily, and at length reached the street door. While he was carrying me, the trunk unfortunately flew open, and not being able to endure the shame of being exposed to the view and shouts of the mob who followed us, I leaped out into the street with so much precipitation, that I have been lame ever since. I was not sensible of the hurt at first, and therefore hastily got up to avoid the people, who laughed at me; nay, I threw handfuls of gold and silver among them, and whilst they were gathering it, made my escape by cross streets and alleys. But the cursed barber followed me close, crying, Stay, sir,

why do you run so fast? If you know how much I am afflicted at the ill treatment you received from the cauzee, you, who are so generous, and to whom I and my friends are so much obliged! Did I not tell you truly, that you would expose your life by your obstinate refusal to let me go with you? See what has happened to you, by your own fault; and if I had not resolutely followed, to see whither you went, what would have become of you? Whither do you go, sir? Stay for me.

Thus the barber hallooed in the street; it was not enough for him to have occasioned so great a scandal in the quarter where the cauzee lived, but he would have it known through the whole town. I was in such a rage, that I had a great mind to stop and cut his throat; but considering this would have perplexed me farther, I chose another course. Perceiving that his calling after me exposed me to vast numbers of people, who crowded to the doors or windows, or stopped in the street to gaze at me, I entered a khan or inn, the chamberlain of which knew me; and finding him at the gate, whither the noise had brought him, I prayed him, for the sake of heaven, to hinder that madman from coming in after me. He promised to do so, and was as good as his word, but not without a great deal of trouble; for the obstinate barber struggled to enter in spite of him, and did not retire without calling him a thousand names. After the chamberlain had shut the gate, the barber continued telling all he met what great service he had done me. Thus I rid myself of that troublesome fellow. After this, the chamberlain requested me to relate my adventure, which I did, and then desired him to let me have an apartment until I was cured: But, sir, said he, will it not be more convenient for you to go home? I will not return thither, replied I; for the detestable barber will continue plaguing me there, and I shall die of vexation to be continually teased by him. Besides, after what has befallen me to-day, I cannot think of staying any longer in this town; I must go whither my ill-fortune leads me. Accordingly, when I was cured, I took all the money I thought necessary for my travels, and divided the rest of my property among my relations.

Thus, gentlemen, I quitted Bagdad, and came hither. I had hoped that I should not meet this pernicious barber in a country so remote from my own, and yet I find him amongst you. Be not surprised then at my haste to be gone: you may easily judge how









unpleasant to me is the sight of a man, who was the occasion of my lameness, and of my being reduced to the melancholy necessity of living so far from my kindred, friends, and country. When he had spoken these words, the lame young man arose and went out; the master of the house conducted him to the gate, and told him, he was sorry that he had, though innocently, occasioned him so much mortification.

When the young man was gone, continued the tailor, we were all astonished at the story, and turning to the barber, told him he was very much to blame, if what we had just heard was true. Gentlemen, answered he, raising up his head, which till then he had held down, my silence during the young man's discourse is sufficient to testify that he advanced nothing that was not true: but notwithstanding all that he has said, I maintain that I ought to have acted as I did; I leave you to be judges. Did not he throw himself into danger, and could he have come off so well without my assistance? He may think himself happy to have escaped with the lame leg. Did not I expose myself to greater danger to get him out of a house where I thought he was ill-treated? Has he any reason to complain of and abuse me? This is what one gets by serving unthankful people. He accuses me of being a prattling fellow, which is a mere slander: of seven brothers, I speak least, and have most wit to my share; and to convince you of this, gentlemen, I need only relate my own story and theirs. Honour me, I beseech you, with your attention.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER.

IN the reign of the caliph Mustunsir Billah, that is, seeking victory of God, continued he, a prince so famous for his liberality towards the poor, ten highwaymen infested the roads about Bagdad, and for a long time committed unheard-of robberies and cruelties. The caliph, having notice of this, sent for the judge of the police, some days before the feast of Bairam, and ordered him, on pain of death, to bring all the ten before him.

The judge of the police used so much diligence, and sent so many people in pursuit

of the ten robbers, that they were taken on the very day of Bairam. I was walking at the time on the banks of the Tygris, and saw ten men richly apparelled go into a boat. Had I but observed the guards who had them in custody, I might have concluded they were robbers; but my attention was fixed on the men themselves, and thinking they were people who designed to spend the festival in jollity, I entered the boat with them, hoping they would not object to my making one of the company. We descended the Tygris, and landed before the caliph's palace: I had by this time had leisure to reflect, and to discover my mistake. When we quitted the boat, we were surrounded by a new troop of the judge of the police's guard, who bound us all, and carried us before the caliph. I suffered myself to be bound as well as the rest, without speaking one word; for what would it have availed to have remonstrated, or made any resistance? That had been the way to have got myself ill-treated by the guards, who would not have listened to me, for they are brutish fellows, who will hear no reason; I was with the robbers, and that was enough to make them believe me to be one of their associates.

After we had been brought before the caliph, he ordered the ten highwaymen's heads to be cut off immediately. The executioner drew us up in a file within reach of his arm, and by good fortune I was placed last. He cut off the heads of the ten highwaymen, beginning at the first; and when he came to me, he stopped. The caliph perceiving that he did not strike me, grew angry: Did not I command thee, said he, to cut off the heads of ten highwaymen, and why hast thou cut off but nine? Commander of the faithful, he replied, Heaven preserve me from disobeying your majesty's orders: here are ten bodies upon the ground, and as many heads which I have cut off; your majesty may count them. When the caliph saw that what the executioner said was true, he looked at me with amazement, and perceiving that I had not the face of a highwayman, said to me, Good old man, how came you to be among those wretches, who have deserved a thousand deaths? I answered, Commander of the faithful, I will make a true confession. This morning I saw those ten persons, whose punishment is a proof of your majesty's justice, take boat: I embarked with them, thinking they were men going to celebrate this day, which is the most distinguished in our religion.

The caliph could not forbear laughing at my adventure; and instead of treating me as a prattling fellow, as this lame young man did, he admired my discretion and taciturnity. Commander of the faithful, I resumed, your majesty need not wonder at my silence on an occasion that would have made any other person speak. I make it a rule to hold my peace, and on that account have acquired the glorious title of *Silent*; by which I am distinguished from my six brothers. This is the effect of my philosophy; and in this virtue consists my glory and happiness. I am glad, said the caliph, smiling, that they gave you a title which you know so well how to merit. But tell me what sort of men were your brothers, were they like you? By no means, I replied, they were all of them loquacious prating fellows. And as to their persons, the difference between us was still greater. The first was hump-backed; the second had rotten teeth; the third had but one eye; the fourth was blind; the fifth had his ears cut off; and the sixth had hare-lips. They had met with such adventures as would enable you to judge of their characters, had I the honour of relating them to your majesty: and as the caliph seemed desirous to hear their several stories, I went on without waiting his commands.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S ELDEST BROTHER.

SIR, I proceeded, my eldest brother, whose name was Bacbouc the hump-back, was a tailor: when he came out of his apprenticeship, he hired a shop over against a mill, and having but little business, could scarcely maintain himself. The miller, on the contrary, was very wealthy, and had a handsome wife. One day, as my brother was at work in his shop, he saw the miller's wife looking out of the window, and was charmed with her beauty. The woman took no notice of him, but shut her window, and made her appearance no more that day. The poor tailor did nothing all day long but lift up his eyes towards the mill. He pricked his finger oftener than once, and his work was not very regular. At night, when he was to shut his shop, he could scarcely tell how to do it,

because he still hoped the miller's wife would once more come to the window; but at last he was forced to close his windows, and go home, where he passed but a very uncomfortable night. He arose betimes in the morning, and ran to his shop, in hopes to see his mistress; but he was no happier than the day before, for the miller's wife did not appear at the window above a minute in the course of the day, but that minute made the tailor the most enamoured man that ever lived. The third day he had more ground of satisfaction, for the miller's wife cast her eyes upon him by chance, and surprised him as he was gazing at her, which convinced her of what was passing in his mind.

No sooner did the miller's wife perceive my brother's inclination, than, instead of allowing it to excite her resentment, she resolved to turn it to her amusement. She looked at him with a smiling countenance, and my brother returned her smile, but in so ludicrous a way, that the miller's wife hastily shut her window, lest her loud laughter should convince him that she was only in sport. Poor Bacbouc interpreted her behaviour to his own advantage, and flattered himself that she regarded him with pleasure.

The miller's wife now laid her plans to divert herself with my brother: she had a piece of very fine stuff, with which she had long designed to make a vest; this she wrapt up in a fine embroidered silk handkerchief, and sent to him by a young slave; who being taught her lesson, went to my brother's shop, and told him, My mistress sends you her service, and requests you to make her a vest of this stuff according to this pattern; as she changes her dress often, her custom will be profitable to you. Bacbouc doubted not but the miller's wife loved him, and thought she had sent him work so soon after what had passed betwixt them, only to intimate that she knew his mind, and convince him that he had obtained her favour. He charged the slave to tell her mistress, that he would lay aside all work for hers, and that the vest should be ready next morning. He worked at it with so much diligence, that he finished it in the course of the same day. Next morning the young slave came to enquire if the vest was ready. Bacbouc delivered it to her neatly folded up, telling her, I feel too solicitous to please your mistress to neglect her work; I would engage her by my diligence to employ no other tailor than myself for the future. The young slave went some steps as if she had intended to depart, but suddenly turning









back, she whispered to my brother, I had forgotten part of my commission; my mistress charged me to convey her compliments to you, and to enquire how you passed the night? as for her, poor woman, she loves you to such a degree that she could not sleep. Tell her, answered my silly brother, I have so strong a passion for her, that for these four nights I have not slept one wink. After such a compliment from the miller's wife, my brother thought she would not let him languish long in expectation of her favours.

About a quarter of an hour after, the slave returned to my brother with a piece of satin: My mistress, said she, is very well pleased with her vest, nothing can fit her better; and as it is very handsome, she will not wear it without a new pair of drawers; she requests you to make her one, as soon as you can, of this piece of satin. Enough, said Bacbouc, I will do it before I leave my shop: you shall have it in the evening. The miller's wife shewed herself often at her window, and was very prodigal of her charms, to encourage my brother. You would have laughed to see him work. The drawers were soon made, and the slave came for them, but brought the tailor no money, neither for the trimming he had bought for the vest, nor for the making. In the mean time, silly Bacbouc, who was too much blinded by love to see that he was only played with, had eaten nothing all that day, and was forced to borrow money in the evening to buy his supper. Next morning, as soon as he arrived at his shop, the young slave came to tell him that the miller wanted to speak to him. My mistress, said she, spoke to him so much in your praise, when she shewed him your work, that he is disposed to let you work for him also; she does this on purpose, in order to conceal the connection which is so much the object of your mutual wishes. My brother was easily persuaded, and went to the mill with the slave. The miller received him very kindly, and shewing him a piece of cloth, told him he wanted shirts, bade him make twenty, and return him again what was left.

My brother had now work enough for five or six days to make these shirts for the miller, who afterwards gave him another piece of cloth to make him as many pair of drawers. When these were finished, Bacbouc carried them to the miller, who asked him what he must have for his work. My brother answered, he would be satisfied with twenty dirhems of silver. The miller immediately called the young slave, and bade her

bring the weights to see if his money was right. The slave, who had her lesson, looked at my brother with an angry countenance, to signify to him, that he would spoil all if he took money. He read her meaning, and refused to take any, though he wanted it so much that he was forced to borrow some to buy the thread to sew the shirts and drawers. When he left the miller, he came to me to borrow money to purchase provisions, and told me they did not pay him. I gave him some copper coin I had in my purse, and upon that he subsisted for some days. It is true, indeed, he lived upon nothing but broth, nor had he his fill of that.

One day he went to the miller, who was busy at his work, and thinking my brother came for money, offered him some; but the young slave being present, made him another sign not to take it, which he complied with, and told the miller he did not come for his money, but only to know how he did. The miller thanked him, and gave him an upper garment to make. Bacbouc carried it to him the next day. When the miller drew out his purse, the young slave gave my brother the usual sign, on which he said to the miller, Neighbour, there is no haste, we will reckon another time; so that the poor ninny went to his shop again, with three terrible disorders, love, hunger, and an empty purse. The miller's wife was not only avaricious, but ill-natured; for, not satisfied with cheating my brother of his due, she provoked her husband to revenge himself upon him for making love to her, which they accomplished thus. The miller invited Bacbouc one night to supper, and after giving him a very sorry treat, said to him, Brother, it is too late for you to return home, you had better stay here all night; and then took him to a place in the mill, where there was a bed; there he left him, and went to bed with his wife. About the middle of the night, the miller came to my brother, and said, Neighbour, are you asleep? My mule is ill, and I have a quantity of corn to grind; you will do me a great kindness if you will turn the mill in her stead. Bacbouc, to shew his good nature, told him, he was ready to do him that service, if he would shew him how. The miller tied him by the middle in the mule's place, and whipping him soundly over the back, said to him, Go on, neighbour. Ho! exclaimed my brother, why do you beat me? It is to make you brisk, replied the miller, for without a whip my mule will not go. Bacbouc was

amazed at this treatment, but durst not complain. When he had gone five or six rounds, he would fain have rested; but the miller gave him a dozen sound lashes, saying, Courage, neighbour! do not stop, pray; you must go on without taking breath, otherwise you will spoil my meal.

The miller obliged my brother to turn the mill in this manner all night. About day-break he left him without untying him, and went to his wife's chamber. Bacbouc continued there for some time, and at last the young slave came and untied him. Ah! said the treacherous little elf, how my mistress and I pitied you! We had no concern in this wicked trick which her husband has played you. The wretched Bacbouc answered not a word, he was so much fatigued with work and blows; but crept to his house, resolving never to think more of the miller's wife.

The telling of this story, continued the barber, made the caliph laugh. Go home, said he to me, I have ordered something to be given you to make up for the loss of the good dinner you expected. Commander of the faithful, I replied, I pray your majesty to let me stay till I have told the story of my other brothers. The caliph having signified by his silence that he was willing to hear me, I proceeded.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S SECOND BROTHER.

MY second brother, who was called Backbarah the Toothless, going one day through the city, met in a distant street an old woman, who came up to him, and said, I want one word with you, pray stop a moment. He did so, and asked what she would have. If you have time to go with me, said she, I will take you into a stately palace, where you shall see a lady as fair as the day. She will receive you with much pleasure, and treat you with excellent wine. I need say no more. But is what you say true? demanded my brother. I am no lying hussy, replied the old woman. I tell you nothing but what is true. But I must caution you to be prudent, and say but little, and to be extremely

polite. Backbarah agreed to all this. The old woman went on, and he followed her. They came to the gate of a great palace, where there was a number of officers and domestics. Some of them would have stopt my brother, but no sooner did the old woman speak to them than they let him pass. Then turning to my brother, she said, You must remember that the young lady I take you to loves good-nature and modesty, and cannot endure to be contradicted; if you please her in these respects, you may be sure to obtain of her what you please.' Backbarah thanked her for this advice, and promised to follow it.

She brought him into a superb court, answerable to the magnificence of the palace. There was a gallery round it, and a garden in the middle. The old woman made him sit down on a handsome sofa, and bade him stay a moment, till she went to acquaint the young lady with his arrival.

My brother, who had never been in such a stately palace before, gazed on the fine things that he saw; and judging of his good fortune by the magnificence of the palace, he was scarcely able to contain himself for joy. In a short time he heard a great noise, occasioned by a troop of merry slaves, who came towards him with loud fits of laughter; and in the middle of them he perceived a young lady of extraordinary beauty, who was easily known to be their mistress by the respect they paid her. Backbarah, who expected private conversation with the lady, was extremely surprised when he saw so much company with her. In the mean time, the slaves, as they drew near, put on a grave countenance; and when the young lady came to the sofa, my brother rose and made her a low obeisance. She took the upper seat, prayed him to sit down, and said to him with a smiling countenance, I am much pleased to see you, and wish you all the happiness you can desire. Madam, replied Backbarah, I cannot desire a greater happiness than to be in your company. You seem to be of a pleasant humour, said she, and to be disposed to pass the time agreeably.

She commanded a collation to be brought; and immediately a table was covered with several baskets of fruits and sweetmeats. The lady sat down at the table with the slaves and my brother; and he being placed just opposite to her, when he opened his mouth to

eat, she perceived he had no teeth; and taking notice of this to her slaves, she and they laughed heartily. Backbarah, from time to time, lifted up his head to look at her, and perceiving her laugh, concluded it was from the pleasure she derived from his company, and flattered himself that she would speedily send away her slaves, and remain with him alone. She guessed his thoughts, and amusing herself to flatter him in this mistake, addressed him in the most pleasant language, and presented him the best of every thing with her own hand. The entertainment being finished, they rose from the table; ten slaves took musical instruments, and began to play and sing, and others to dance. My brother, to please them, danced likewise, and the lady danced with them. After they had danced some time, they sat down to take breath, and the young lady calling for a glass of wine, looked at my brother with a smiling countenance, to signify that she was going to drink his health. He rose, and stood while she drank. When she had done, instead of giving back the glass, she ordered it to be filled, and presented it to my brother, that he might pledge her. My brother took the glass from the young lady's hand, which he kissed at the same time, and stood and drank to her, in return for the favour she had done him. The young lady then made him sit down by her, and began to caress him. She put her hand behind his head, and gave him some tips from time to time with her fingers: ravished with these favours, he thought himself the happiest man in the world, and felt disposed to toy with the charming lady, but durst not take that liberty before so many slaves, who had their eyes upon him, and laughed at their lady's wanton tricks. The young lady continued to tip him with her fingers, but at last gave him such a sound box on the ear, that he grew angry; the colour came into his face, and he rose up to remove to a greater distance from such a rude playfellow. Then the old woman, who brought him thither, gave him a look, to let him know that he was in the wrong, and that he had forgotten her advice, to be very complaisant. He owned his fault, and to make amends, went near the young lady again, pretending that he did not remove out of any ill-humour. She drew him by the arm, made him sit down by her, and gave him a thousand malicious squeezes. Her slaves took their part in the diversion; one gave poor Backbarah several fillips on the nose with all her might; another pulled him by the

ears, as if she would have pulled them off; and others boxed him in a manner that might have made it appear they were not in jest. My brother bore all this with admirable patience, affecting a gay air, and looking at the old woman, said to her with a forced smile, You told me, indeed, that I should find the lady perfectly kind, pleasant, and charming; I am mightily obliged to you! All this is nothing, replied the old woman: let her go on, you will see other things by and by. Then the young lady said to him, Brother, you are a brave man; I am glad to find you are so good-humoured and complaisant to bear with my little caprices, and that your humour is so conformable to mine. Madam, replied Backbarah, who was charmed with this address, I am no longer at my own disposal, I am wholly yours; you may do with me as you please. How you oblige me, returned the lady, by such submission! I am well pleased with you, and would have you be so with me: bring him perfume, and rose-water. Upon this, two slaves went out and returned speedily, one with a silver casket, filled with the best of aloes-wood, with which she perfumed him; and the other with rose-water, which she sprinkled on his face and hands. My brother was quite enraptured with this handsome treatment. After this ceremony, the young lady commanded the slaves, who had already played on their instruments and sung, to renew their concerts. They obeyed, and while they were thus employed, the lady called another slave, and ordered her to take my brother with her, and do what she knew, and bring him back to her again. Backbarah, who heard this order, got up quickly, and going to the old woman, who also rose to accompany him and the slave, prayed her to inform him what they were to do with him. My mistress is only curious, replied the old woman softly; she has a mind to see how you look in a woman's dress, and this slave, who is desired to take you with her, has orders to paint your eye-brows, to cut off your whiskers, and to dress you like a woman. You may paint my eye-brows as much as you please, said my brother, I consent to that, because I can wash it off again; but to shave me, you know I must not permit. How can I appear abroad again without mustaches? Beware of refusing what is asked of you, returned the old woman: you will spoil your fortune, which is now in as favourable a train as heart can wish. The lady loves you, and has a mind to make you happy; and will you, for a









nasty whisker, renounce the most delicious favours that man can obtain? Backbarah listened to the old woman, and without saying a word, went to a chamber with the slave, where they painted his eye-brows with red, cut off his whiskers, and were going to do the like with his beard. My brother's patience then began to fail; O! said he, I will never part with my beard. The slave told him, that it was to no purpose to have parted with his whiskers, if he would not also part with his beard, which could never comport with a woman's dress; and she wondered that a man, who was upon the point of enjoying the finest lady in Bagdad, should be concerned about his beard. The old woman threatened him with the loss of the young lady's favour; so that at last he allowed them to do what they would. When he was dressed in female attire, they brought him before the young lady, who laughed so heartily when she saw him, that she fell backward on the sofa. The slaves laughed and clapped their hands, so that my brother was quite out of countenance. The young lady got up, and still laughing, said to him, After so much complaisance, I should be very much to blame not to love you with all my heart: but there is one thing more you must do for me, and that is, to *dance as we do*. He obeyed, and the young lady and her slaves danced with him, laughing as if they had been mad. After they had danced some time, they all fell upon the poor wretch, and did so box and kick him, that he fell down like one out of his senses. The old woman helped him up again; and that he might not have time to think of his ill-treatment, bade him take courage, and whispered in his ear, that all his sufferings were at an end, and that he was just about to receive his reward. You have only one thing more to do, said she, and that is but a small one. You must know that my mistress has a custom, when she has drunk a little, as you see she has done to day, to let no one that she loves come near her, except they be stripped to their shirt; and when they have done so, she takes a little advantage of them, and begins running before them through the gallery, and from chamber to chamber, till they catch her. This is one more of her humours: what advantage soever she takes of you, considering your nimbleness and inclination, you will soon overtake her; strip yourself then to your shirt, undress yourself without ceremony.

My silly brother had done too much to hesitate at any thing now. He undressed

himself; and in the mean time the young lady was stripped to her shift and drawers, that she might run the more nimbly. When they were ready, the young lady took the advantage of twenty paces, and then began to run with surprising swiftness; my brother followed as fast as he could, the slaves in the mean time laughing heartily and clapping their hands. The young lady, instead of losing ground, gained upon my brother: she made him run two or three times round the gallery, and then entering a long dark passage, made her escape. Backbarah, who still followed, having lost sight of her in the passage, was obliged to slacken his pace, because of the darkness of the place: at last perceiving a light, he ran towards it, and went out at a door, which was immediately shut after him. You may imagine how he was surprised to find himself in a street inhabited by curriers, and they were no less surprised to see him in his shirt, his eyes painted red, and without beard or mustaches: they began to clap their hands and shout at him, and some of them ran after him and lashed his back with leather straps. They then took him and set him upon an ass which they met by chance, and carried him through the town exposed to the laughter of the people.

To complete his misfortune, as he went by the judge's house, he would needs know the cause of the tumult. The curriers told him, that they saw him come in that condition from the gate of the apartments of the grand vizier's women, which opened into their street; upon which the judge ordered unfortunate Backbarah to have a hundred blows with a cane on the soles of his feet, and sent him out of the town, with orders never to return.

Thus, commander of the faithful, said I to the caliph, I have given an account of the adventure of my second brother, who did not know that our greatest ladies divert themselves sometimes by putting such tricks upon young people, who are so foolish as to be caught in the snare.

The barber, without breaking off, proceeded to relate the story of his third brother in the following manner.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S THIRD BROTHER.

COMMANDER of the faithful, my third brother, whose name was Backbac, was blind, and his evil destiny reduced him to beg from door to door. He had been so long accustomed to walk through the streets alone, that he wanted none to lead him: he had a custom to knock at people's doors, and not to answer till they opened to him. One day he knocked thus, and the master of the house, who was alone, cried, Who is there? My brother made no answer, and knocked a second time: the master of the house asked again and again, Who is there? but to no purpose, no one answered; upon which he came down, opened the door, and asked my brother what he wanted? Give me something for Heaven's sake, said Backbac. You seem to be blind, replied the master of the house. Yes, to my sorrow, answered my brother. Give me your hand, resumed the master of the house. My brother did so, thinking he was going to give him alms; but he only took him by the hand to lead him up to his chamber. Backbac thought he had been carrying him to dine with him, as many other people had done. When they reached the chamber, the man let go his hand, and sitting down, asked him again what he wanted? I have already told you, said Backbac, that I want something for God's sake. Good blind man, replied the master of the house, all that I can do for you is to wish that God may restore you your sight. You might have told me that at the door, replied my brother, and not have given me the trouble to come up stairs. And why, fool, said the man of the house, do not you answer at first, when people ask you who is there? Why do you give any body the trouble to come and open the door when they speak to you? What will you do with me then? asked my brother. I tell you again, said the man of the house, I have nothing to give you. Help me down the stairs then, as you brought me up. The stairs are before you, said the man of the house, and you may go down by yourself if you will. My brother attempted to descend, but missing a step about the middle of the stairs, fell to the bottom and hurt his head and his back: he got up again

with much difficulty, and went out cursing the master of the house, who laughed at his fall.

As my brother went out of the house, two blind men, his companions, were going by, knew him by his voice, and asked him what was the matter? He told them what had happened; and afterwards said, I have eaten nothing to day; I conjure you to go with me to my house, that I may take some of the money that we three have in common to buy me something for supper. The two blind men agreed, and they went home with him.

You must know that the master of the house where my brother was so ill used was a robber, and of a cunning and malicious disposition. He overheard from his window what Backbac had said to his companions, and came down and followed them to my brother's house. The blind men being seated, Backbac said to them, Brothers, we must shut the door, and take care there be no stranger with us. At this the robber was much perplexed, but perceiving a rope hanging down from a beam, he caught hold of it, and hung by it, while the blind men shut the door, and felt about the room with their sticks. When they had done, and had sat down again in their places, the robber left his rope, and seated himself softly by my brother, who thinking himself alone with his blind comrades, said to them, Brothers, since you have trusted me with the money, which we have been a long time gathering, I will shew you that I am not unworthy of the confidence you repose in me. The last time we reckoned, you know we had ten thousand dirhems, and that we put them into ten bags; I will shew you that I have not touched one of them: having so said, he put his hand among some old clothes, and taking out the bags one after another, gave them to his comrades, saying, There they are; you may judge by their weight that they are whole, or you may tell them if you please. His comrades answered there was no need, they did not mistrust him; so he opened one of the bags, and took out ten dirhems, and each of the other blind men did the like.

My brother put the bags into their place again: after which, one of the blind men said to him, There is no need to lay out any thing for supper, for I have collected as much victuals from good people as will serve us all. At the same time he took out of his bag bread and cheese, and some fruit, and putting all upon the table, they began to









eat. The robber, who sat at my brother's right hand, picked out the best, and ate with them; but, notwithstanding all the care he took to make no noise, Backbac heard his chaps going, and cried out immediately, We are undone, there is a stranger among us: having so said, he stretched out his hand, and caught hold of the robber by the arm, cried out Thieves, fell upon him, and struck him. The other blind men fell upon him in like manner; the robber defended himself as well as he could, and being young and vigorous, besides having the advantage of his eyes, gave furious blows, sometimes to one, sometimes to another, and cried out Thieves louder than they did. The neighbours came running at the noise, broke open the door, and had much ado to separate the combatants; but having at last succeeded, they asked the cause of their quarrel. My brother, who still had hold of the robber, cried out, Gentlemen, this man is a thief, and entered with us on purpose to rob us of the little money we have. The thief, who shut his eyes as soon as the neighbours came, feigned himself blind, and exclaimed, Gentlemen, he is a liar. I swear to you by heaven, and by the life of the caliph, that I am their companion, and they refuse to give me my just share. They have all three fallen upon me, and I demand justice. The neighbours would not interfere in their quarrel, but carried them all before the judge.

When they came before the magistrate, the robber, without staying to be examined, cried out, still feigning himself blind, Sir, since you are deputed to administer justice by the caliph, whom God prosper, I declare to you that we are equally criminal, my three comrades and I; but we have all engaged, upon oath, to confess nothing except we be bastinadoed; so that if you would know our crime, you need only order us to be bastinadoed, and begin with me. My brother would have spoken, but was not allowed to do so: and the robber was put under the bastinado.

After he had received twenty or thirty blows, pretending to be overcome with pain, he first opened one eye, and then the other, and crying out for mercy, begged the judge would put a stop to the blows. The judge perceiving that he looked at him with his eyes open, was much surprised, and said to him, Rogue, what is the meaning of this miracle? Sir, replied the robber, I will discover to you an important secret, if you will

pardon me, and give me, as a pledge that you will keep your word, the seal-ring which you have on your finger. The judge consented, gave him his ring, and promised him pardon. Under this promise, continued the robber, I must confess to you, sir, that I and my three comrades do all of us see very well. We feigned ourselves to be blind, that we might freely enter people's houses, and women's apartments, where we abuse their weakness. I must farther confess to you, that by this trick we have gained together ten thousand dirhems. This day I demanded of my partners two thousand five hundred that belonged to my share, but they refused because I told them I would leave them; and they were afraid I should accuse them. Upon my pressing still to have my share, they fell upon me; for which I appeal to those people who brought us before you. I expect from your justice, sir, that you will make them deliver me the two thousand five hundred dirhems which is my due; and if you have a mind that my comrades should confess the truth, you must order them three times as many blows as I have had, and you will find they will open their eyes as I have done.

My brother and the other two blind men would have cleared themselves of this horrid charge, but the judge would not hear them: Villains, said he, do you feign yourselves blind then, and, under that pretext of moving their compassion, cheat people, and commit such crimes? He is an impostor, cried my brother, and we take God to witness that none of us can see.

All that my brother could say was in vain, his comrades and he received each of them two hundred blows. The judge expected them to open their eyes, and ascribed to their obstinacy what really they could not do. All the while the robber said to the blind men, Poor fools that you are, open your eyes, and do not suffer yourselves to be beaten to death. Then addressing himself to the judge, said, I perceive, sir, that they will be maliciously obstinate to the last, and will never open their eyes. They wish certainly to avoid the shame of reading their own condemnation in the face of every one that looks at them; it were better, if you think fit, to pardon them, and to send some person along with me for the ten thousand dirhems they have hidden.

The judge consented to give the robber two thousand five hundred dirhems, and kept

the rest himself; and as for my brother and his two companions, he thought he shewed them pity by sentencing them only to be banished. As soon as I heard what had befallen my brother, I went to him; he told me his misfortune, and I brought him back secretly to the town. I could easily have justified him to the judge, and have had the robber punished as he deserved, but durst not make the attempt, for fear of bringing myself into danger of assassination. Thus I finished the sad adventure of my honest blind brother. The caliph laughed at it, as much as at those he had heard before, and ordered again that something should be given me; but without staying for it, I began the story of my fourth brother.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S FOURTH BROTHER.

ALCOUZ was the name of the fourth brother, who lost one of his eyes, upon an occasion that I shall have the honour to relate to your majesty. He was a butcher by profession, and had a particular way of teaching rams to fight, by which he gained the acquaintance and friendship of the chief lords of the country, who loved that sport, and for that end kept rams at their houses. He had besides a very good trade, and had his shop always full of the best meat, because he spared no cost for the prime of every sort. One day when he was in his shop, an old man with a long white beard came and bought six pounds of meat of him, gave him money for it, and went his way. My brother thought the money so pure and well coined, that he put it apart by itself: the same old man came every day for five months together, bought a like quantity of meat, and paid for it in the same kind of money, which my brother continued to lay apart.

At the end of five months, Alcouz having a mind to buy a lot of sheep, and to pay for them in this money, opened his chest; but instead of finding his money, was extremely surprised to see nothing in the place where he had laid it, but a parcel of leaves clipped round. He beat his head, and cried out aloud, which presently brought the

neighbours about him, who were as much surprised as he, when he told them the story. O! cried my brother, weeping, that this treacherous old fellow would come now with his hypocritical looks! He had scarcely spoken, when he saw him at a distance; he ran to him, and laid hands on him; Moosulmauns, cried he, as loud as he could, help! hear what a cheat this wicked fellow has put upon me, and at the same time told a great crowd of people, who came about him, what he had formerly told his neighbours. When he had done, the old man said to him very gravely and calmly, You had better let me go, and by that means make amends for the affront you have put upon me before so many people, for fear I should put a greater affront upon you, which I should be sorry to do. How, said my brother, what have you to say against me? I am an honest man in my business, and fear not you, nor any body. You would have me speak out then, resumed the old man in the same tone; and turning to the crowd, said to them, Know, good people, that this fellow, instead of selling mutton as he ought to do, sells human flesh. You are a cheat, said my brother. No, no, continued the old man; good people, this very minute while I am speaking to him, there is a man with his throat cut hung up in the shop like a sheep; do any of you go thither, and see if what I say be not true.

Just before my brother had opened his chest he had killed a sheep, dressed it, and exposed it in the shop, according to custom: he protested that what the old man said was false; but notwithstanding all his protestations, the credulous mob, prejudiced against a man accused of such a heinous crime, would go to see whether the charge were true. They obliged my brother to quit the old man, laid hold of him, and ran like madmen into his shop, where they saw, to all appearance, a man hung up with his throat cut, as the old man had told them; for he was a magician, and deceived the eyes of all people, as he did my brother, when he made him take leaves instead of money. At this sight, one of those who held Alcouz gave him a violent blow with his fist, and said to him, Thou wicked villain, dost thou make us eat man's flesh instead of mutton? And at the same time the old man gave him another blow, which beat out one of his eyes. Every body that could get near him struck him; and not content with that, they carried him before a judge, with the pretended carcase of the man, to be evidence against him.









Sir, said the old magician to the judge, we have brought you a man, who is so barbarous as to murder people, and to sell their flesh instead of mutton. The public expects that you will punish him in an exemplary manner. The judge heard my brother with patience, but would believe nothing of the story of the money changed into leaves, called my brother a cheat, told him he would believe his own eyes, and ordered him to receive five hundred blows. He afterwards made him tell him where his money was, took it all from him, and banished him for ever, after having made him ride three days through the city upon a camel, exposed to the insults of the people.

I was not at Bagdad when this tragical adventure befell my fourth brother. He retired into a remote place, where he lay concealed till he was cured of the blows with which his back was terribly mangled. When he was able to walk, he went by night to a certain town where nobody knew him; and there he took a lodging, from whence he seldom moved; but being weary of this confined life, he went to walk in one of the suburbs, where suddenly he heard a noise of horsemen coming behind him. He was then by chance near the gate of a house, and fearing, after what had befallen him, that these horsemen were pursuing him, he opened the gate in order to hide himself, and after he had shut it, entered a court, where immediately two servants came and collared him, saying, Heaven be praised, that you have come of your own accord to surrender yourself; you have alarmed us so much these last three nights, that we could not sleep; nor would you have spared our lives, if we had not prevented your design. You may well imagine my brother was much surprised. Good people, said he, I know not what you mean; you certainly take me for somebody else. No, no, replied they, we know that you and your comrades are robbers: you were not contented to rob our master of all that he had, and to reduce him to beggary, but you conspired to take his life. Let us see if you have not a knife about you, which you had in your hand when you pursued us last night. Having said thus, they searched him, and found he had a knife. Ho! ho! cried they, laying hold of him, and dare you say that you are not a robber? Why, said my brother, cannot a man carry a knife about him without being a robber? If you will hearken to my story, instead of having so bad an opinion of me, you will be touched with compassion at my

misfortunes. But far from attending to him, they fell upon him, trod upon him, took away his clothes, and tore his shirt. Then seeing the scars on his back, O dog, said they, redoubling their blows, would you have us believe you are an honest man, when your back shews us the contrary? Alas! said my brother, my crimes must be very great, since, after having been abused already so unjustly, I am thus treated a second time without being more culpable!

The two servants, no way moved with his complaint, carried him before the judge, who asked him how he durst presume to go into their house, and pursue them with a drawn knife? Sir, replied the unfortunate Alcouz, I am the most innocent man in the world, and am undone if you will not be pleased to hear me patiently: no one deserves more compassion. Sir, exclaimed one of the domestics, will you listen to a robber, who enters people's houses to plunder and murder them? If you will not believe us, only look at his back; and while he said so, he uncovered my brother's back, and shewed it to the judge, who, without any other information, commanded his officers immediately to give him a hundred lashes over the shoulders, and made him afterwards be carried through the town on a camel, with one crying before him, Thus are men punished who enter people's houses by force. After having treated him thus, they banished him the town, and forbid him ever to return. Some people, who met him after the second misfortune, brought me word where he was; I went, brought him to Bagdad privately, and gave him all the assistance I could. The caliph, continued the barber, did not laugh so much at this story as at the other. He was pleased to pity the unfortunate Alcouz, and ordered something to be given me. But without giving his servants time to obey his orders, I continued my discourse, and said to him: My sovereign lord and master, you see that I do not talk much; and since your majesty has been pleased to do me the favour to listen to me so far, I beg you would likewise hear the adventures of my two other brothers. I hope they will be as diverting as those of the former. You may make a complete history of them, that will not be unworthy of your library: I shall do myself the honour then to acquaint you, that the fifth brother was called Alnaschar.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S FIFTH BROTHER.

ALNASCHAR, as long as our father lived, was very lazy: instead of working he used to beg in the evening, and live upon what he got. Our father died at a very old age, and left among us seven hundred dirhems: we divided equally, so that each of us had a hundred for his share. Alnaschar, who had never before possessed so much money, was much perplexed to know what he should do with it. He consulted a long time with himself, and at last resolved to lay it out in glass-ware, which he bought of a wholesale dealer. He put all in an open basket, and sat with it before him, and his back against a wall, in a place where he might sell it. In this posture, with his eyes fixed on his basket, he began to meditate; during which, he spoke as follows: This basket cost me a hundred dirhems, which is all I have in the world. I shall make two hundred of them by retailing my glass, and of these two hundred, which I will again lay out in glass-ware, I shall make four hundred; and going on thus, I shall at last make four thousand dirhems; of four thousand I shall easily make eight thousand, and when I come to ten thousand, I will leave off selling glass, and turn jeweller; I will trade in diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones: then when I am as rich as I can wish, I will buy a fine mansion, a great estate, slaves, eunuchs, and horses. I will keep a good house, and make a great figure in the world; I will send for all the musicians and dancers of both sexes in town. Nor will I stop here, for I will, by the favour of Heaven, go on till I get one hundred thousand dirhems, and when I have amassed so much, I will send to demand the grand vizier's daughter in marriage; and represent to that minister, that I have heard much of the wonderful beauty, understanding, wit, and all the other qualities of his daughter; in a word, that I will give him a thousand pieces of gold the first night after we are married; and if the vizier be so uncivil as to refuse his daughter, which cannot be supposed, I will go and carry her off before his face, and take her to my house, whether he will or no. As soon as I have married the grand vizier's daughter, I will buy her ten young black

eunuchs, the handsomest that can be had; I will clothe myself like a prince, and mounted upon a fine horse, with a saddle of fine gold, with housings of cloth of gold, finely embroidered with diamonds and pearls, I will ride through the city, attended by slaves before and behind. I will go to the vizier's palace in view of all the people great and small, who will shew me the most profound respect. When I alight at the foot of the vizier's staircase, I will ascend through my own people, ranged in files on the right and left; and the grand vizier, receiving me as his son-in-law, shall give me the right hand, and set me above him, to do me the more honour. If this comes to pass, as I hope it will, two of my people shall each of them have a purse with a thousand pieces of gold, which they shall carry with them. I will take one, and presenting it to the grand vizier, will tell him, There are the thousand pieces of gold that I promised the first night of marriage; and I will offer him the other, and say to him, There is as much more, to shew you that I am a man of my word, and even better than my promise. After such an action as this, all the world will talk of my generosity. I will return to my own house in the same pomp. My wife will send some officer to compliment me, on account of my visit to the vizier her father: I will honour the officer with a fine robe, and send him back with a rich present. If she send me a present, I will not accept it, but dismiss the bearer. I will not suffer her to go out of her apartment on any account whatever, without giving me notice: and when I have a mind to come to her apartment, it shall be in such a manner as to make her respect me. In short, no house shall be better ordered than mine. I will be always richly clad. When I retire with my wife in the evening, I will sit on the upper seat, I will affect a grave air, without turning my head to one side or the other. I will speak little; and whilst my wife, beautiful as the full moon, stands before me in all her charms, I will make as if I did not see her. Her women about her will say to me, Our dear lord and master, here is your spouse, your humble servant, before you, ready to receive your caresses, but much mortified that you do not vouchsafe to look at her; she is wearied with standing so long, bid her, at least, sit down. I will make no answer, which will increase their surprise and grief. They will prostrate themselves at my feet; and after they have for a considerable time entreated me to relent, I









will at last lift up my head, give her a careless look, and resume my former posture: they will suppose that my wife is not handsomely enough dressed, and will take her to her closet to change her apparel. At the same time I will get up and put on a more magnificent suit; they will return and address me as before, but I will not so much as look at my wife, till they have prayed and entreated as long as they did at first. Thus I will begin on the first day of marriage, to teach her what she is to expect during the rest of her life.

After the ceremonies of the marriage I will take from one of my servants, who shall be about me, a purse of five hundred pieces of gold, which I will give to the tire-women, that they may leave me alone with my spouse: when they are gone, my wife shall go to bed first; then I will lie down by her with my back towards her, and will not say one word to her all night. The next morning she will certainly complain of my contempt and of my pride, to her mother the grand vizier's wife, which will rejoice my heart. Her mother will come to wait upon me, respectfully kiss my hands, and say to me, Sir, (for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, for fear of provoking me by such a familiar style), I entreat you not to disdain to look on my daughter, and refuse to come near her. I assure you that her chief delight is to please you, and that she loves you with all her soul. But in spite of all my mother-in-law can say, I will not answer her one word, but keep an obstinate gravity. Then she will throw herself at my feet, kiss them repeatedly, and say to me, Sir, is it possible that you can suspect my daughter's virtue? You are the first man who ever saw her face: do not mortify her so much; do her the favour to look upon her, to speak to her, and confirm her in her good intentions to satisfy you in every thing. But nothing of this shall prevail with me. Upon which my mother-in-law will take a glass of wine, and putting it in the hand of her daughter my wife, will say, Go, present him this glass of wine yourself; perhaps he will not be so cruel as to refuse it from so fair a hand. My wife will come with the glass and stand trembling before me; and when she finds that I do not look towards her, but that I continue to disdain her, she will say to me, with tears in her eyes, My heart, my dear soul, my amiable lord, I conjure you, by the favours which heaven heaps upon you, to receive this glass of wine from the hand of

your most humble servant: but I will not look at her still, nor answer her. My charming spouse, will she say, redoubling her tears, and putting the glass to my mouth, I will never cease till I prevail with you to drink; then wearied with her intreaties, I will dart a terrible look at her, shake my hand in her face, and spurn her from me with my foot.

My brother was so full of these chimerical visions, that he acted with his foot as if she had been really before him, and unfortunately gave such a push to his basket and glasses, that they were thrown down, and broken into a thousand pieces.

On this fatal accident, he came to himself, and perceiving that he had brought misfortune upon himself by his insupportable pride, beat his face, tore his clothes, and cried so loud, that the neighbours came about him; and the people, who were going to their noon prayers, stopped to know what was the matter. Being on a Friday, more people went to prayers than usual; some of them took pity on Alnaschar, and others only laughed at his extravagance. In the mean time, his vanity being dispersed with his property, he bitterly bewailed his loss; and a lady of rank passing by upon a mule richly caparisoned, my brother's situation moved her compassion. She asked who he was, and what he cried for? They told her, that he was a poor man, who had laid out the little money he possessed in the purchase of a basket of glass-ware, that the basket had fallen, and all his glasses were broken. The lady immediately turned to an eunuch who attended her, and said to him, Give the poor man what you have about you. The eunuch obeyed, and put into my brother's hands a purse with five hundred pieces of gold. Alnaschar was ready to die with joy when he received it. He gave a thousand blessings to the lady, and shutting up his shop, where he had no more occasion to sit, went to his house.

While he was pondering over his good luck, he heard somebody knock at his door. Before he opened, he asked who it was, and knowing by the voice that it was a woman, he let her in. My son, said she, I have a favour to beg of you: the hour of prayer is come, let me perform my ablutions in your house, that I may be fit to say my prayers. My brother looking at her, and seeing that she was well advanced in years, though he knew her not, granted her request, and sat down again, still full of his new adventure.

He put his gold in a long strait purse, proper to carry at his girdle. The old woman in the mean time said her prayers, and when she had done, came to my brother and bowed twice to the ground, so low, that she touched it with her forehead: then rising up, she wished him all happiness, and thanked him for his civility. Being meanly clad, and very humble, he thought she asked alms; upon which he offered her two pieces of gold. The old woman stepped back in a sort of surprise, as if my brother had affronted her. Good God! said she, what is the meaning of this? Is it possible, sir, that you took me for one of those impudent beggars who push into people's houses to ask alms? Take back your money: thank heaven, I need it not. I belong to a young lady of this city, who is a perfect beauty, and very rich; she lets me want for nothing.

My brother was not cunning enough to perceive the craft of the old woman, who only refused the two pieces of gold, that she might catch more. He asked her, if she could not procure him the honour of seeing that lady. With all my heart, she replied; she will be very glad to marry you, and to put you in possession of her fortune, by making you master of her person. Take up your money, and follow me. My brother, transported with his good luck in finding so great a sum of money, and almost at the same time a beautiful and rich wife, shut his eyes to all other considerations; so that he took his five hundred pieces of gold, and followed the old woman. She walked on, and he followed at a distance, to the gate of a great house, where she knocked. He came up just as a young Greek slave opened the gate. The old woman made him enter first, crossed a well-paved court, and introduced him into a hall, the furniture of which confirmed him in the good opinion he had conceived of the mistress of the house. While the old woman went to acquaint the lady, he sat down, and the weather being hot, put off his turban, and laid it by him. He speedily saw the young lady enter: her beauty and rich apparel perfectly surprised him; he arose as soon as he saw her. The lady, with a smiling countenance, prayed him to sit down again, and placed herself by him. She told him, she was very glad to see him; and after having spoken some engaging words, said, We do not sit here at our ease. Come, give me your hand. At these words she presented him hers, and conducted him into an inner chamber, where she conversed with him for some time: she

then left him, saying that she would be with him in a moment. He waited for her; but instead of the lady came in a great black slave with a cimeter in his hand, and looking towards my brother with a terrible aspect, said to him fiercely, What have you to do here? Alnaschar was so frightened, that he had not power to answer. The black stripped him, carried off his gold, and gave him several flesh wounds with his cimeter. My unhappy brother fell to the ground, where he lay without motion, though he had still the use of his senses. The black thinking him to be dead, asked for salt: the Greek slave brought him a bason full: they rubbed my brother's wounds with it, but he had so much command of himself, notwithstanding the intolerable pain it put him to, that he lay still without giving any sign of life. The black and the Greek slave having retired, the old woman, who had enticed my brother into the snare, came and dragged him by the feet to a trap-door, which she opened, and threw him into a place under ground, among the bodies of several other people who had been murdered. He perceived this as soon as he came to himself, for the violence of the fall had taken away his senses. The salt rubbed into his wounds preserved his life, and he recovered strength by degrees, so as to be able to walk. After two days he opened the trap-door in the night, and finding in the court a place proper to hide himself in, continued there till break of day, when he saw the cursed old woman open the street gate, and go out to seek another victim. He stayed in the place some time after she was gone, that she might not see him, and then came to me for shelter, when he told me of his adventures.

In a month's time he was perfectly cured of his wounds by medicines that I gave him, and resolved to avenge himself of the old woman, who had put such a barbarous cheat upon him. To this end he took a bag, large enough to contain five hundred pieces of gold, and filled it with pieces of glass. He fastened the bag about him, disguised himself like an old woman, and took a cimeter under his gown. One morning he met the old woman walking through the town to seek her prey; he went up to her, and counterfeiting a woman's voice, said, Cannot you lend me a pair of scales? I am newly come from Persia, have brought five hundred pieces of gold with me, and would know if they are weight. Good woman, answered the old hag, you could not have applied to a fitter

person: follow me, I will conduct you to my son, who changes money, and will weigh them himself to save you the trouble. Let us make haste, for fear he should go to his shop. My brother followed her to the house where she carried him at first, and the Greek slave opened the door.

The old woman took my brother to the hall, where she desired him to wait till she called her son. The pretended son came, and proved to be the villainous black slave. Come, old woman, said he to my brother, rise and follow me: having spoken thus, he went before to conduct him to the place where he designed to murder him. Alnaschar got up, followed him, and drawing his cimeter, gave him such a dexterous blow behind on the neck, that he cut off his head, which he took in one hand, and dragging the corpse with the other, threw them both into the place under ground before-mentioned. The Greek slave, who was accustomed to the trade, came presently with a bason of salt; but when she saw Alnaschar with his cimeter in his hand, and without his veil, she laid down the bason, and fled. But my brother overtaking her, cut off her head also. The wicked old woman came running at the noise, and my brother seizing her, said to her, Treacherous wretch, do not you know me? Alas, Sir! answered she trembling, who are you? I do not remember that I ever saw you. I am, replied he, the person to whose house you came the other day to wash and say your prayers. Hypocritical hag, do not you remember? Then she fell on her knees to beg his pardon, but he cut her in four pieces.

There remained only the lady, who knew nothing of what had passed: he sought her out, and found her in a chamber, where she was ready to sink when she saw him: she begged her life, which he generously granted. Madam, said he, how could you live with such wicked people, as I have so justly revenged myself upon? I was, she answered, wife to an honest merchant; and the old woman, whose wickedness I did not then know, used sometimes to come to see me; Madam, said she to me one day, we have a wedding at our house, which you will be pleased to see, if you will give us the honour of your company: I was persuaded by her, put on my best apparel, and took with me a hundred pieces of gold. I followed her; she brought me to this house, where the black has since kept me by force, and I have been three years here to my great sorrow. By the trade

which that cursed black followed, replied my brother, he must have gathered together a vast deal of riches. There is so much, said she, that you will be made for ever, if you can carry them off: follow me, and you shall see them. Alnaschar followed her to a chamber, where she shewed him several coffers full of gold, which he beheld with admiration. Go, said she, and fetch people to carry it all off. My brother went out, got ten men together, and brought them with him, but was much surprised to find the gate open, the lady and the coffers gone; for she being more diligent than he, had conveyed them all off and disappeared. However, being resolved not to return empty-handed, he carried off all the furniture of the house, which was a great deal more than enough to make up the five hundred pieces of gold he had been robbed of; but when he went out of the house, he forgot to shut the gate. The neighbours, who saw my brother and the porters come and go, went and acquainted the magistrate, for they looked upon my brother's conduct as suspicious. Alnaschar slept well enough all night, but the next morning, when he came out of his house, twenty of the magistrate's men seized him. Come along with us, said they, our master would speak with you. My brother prayed them to have patience for a moment, and offered them a sum of money to let him escape; but instead of listening to him, they bound him, and forced him to go with them. They met in the street an old acquaintance of my brother's, who stopped them awhile, asked them why they had seized my brother, offered them a considerable sum to let him escape, and tell the magistrate they could not find him, but in vain.

When the officers brought him before the magistrate, he asked him where he had the goods which he had carried home the preceding evening? Sir, replied Alnaschar, I am ready to tell you all the truth; but allow me first to have recourse to your clemency, and to beg your promise, that I shall not be punished. I give it you, said the magistrate. My brother then told him the whole story without disguise, from the period the old woman came into his house to say her prayers, to the time the lady made her escape, after he had killed the black, the Greek slave, and the old woman; and as for what he had carried to his house, he prayed the judge to leave him part of it, for the five hundred pieces of gold of which he had been robbed.

The judge, without promising any thing, sent his officers to bring off the whole, and having put the goods into his own warehouse, commanded my brother to quit the town immediately, and never to return, for he was afraid, if he had staid in the city, he would have found some way to represent this injustice to the caliph. In the mean time, Al-naschar obeyed without murmuring, and left that town to go to another. By the way, he met with highwaymen, who stript him naked; and when the ill news was brought to me, I carried him a suit, and brought him secretly into the town, where I took the like care of him as I did of his other brothers.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S SIXTH BROTHER.

I HAVE now only to relate the story of my sixth brother, called Schacabac, with the hare lips. At first he was industrious enough to improve the hundred dirhems of silver which fell to his share, and went on very well; but a reverse of fortune brought him to beg his bread, which he did with a great deal of dexterity. He studied chiefly to get into great men's houses, by means of their servants and officers, that he might have access to their masters, and obtain their charity. One day as he passed by a magnificent house, whose high gate shewed a very spacious court, where there was a multitude of servants, he went to one of them, and asked him to whom that house belonged? Good man, replied the servant, whence do you come that you ask me such a question? Does not all that you behold point out to you that it is the palace of a Bermukkee? My brother, who very well knew the liberality and generosity of the Bermukkees, addressed himself to one of his porters (for he had more than one), and prayed him to give him an alms. Go in, said he, nobody hinders you, and address yourself to the master of the house; he will send you back satisfied.

My brother, who expected no such civility, thanked the porters, and with their permission entered the palace, which was so large, that it took him a considerable time to

reach the Bermukkee's apartment; at last he came to an arcade square building of an excellent architecture, and entered by parterres of flowers intersected by walks of several colours, extremely pleasant to the eye: the lower apartments round this square were most of them open, and were shut only with great curtains to keep out the sun, which were opened again when the heat was over to let in the fresh air.

Such an agreeable place would have struck my brother with admiration, even if his mind had been more at ease than it was. He went on till he came into a hall richly furnished and adorned with painting of gold and azure foliage, where he saw a venerable man with a long white beard, sitting at the upper end on a sofa, whence he concluded him to be the master of the house; and in fact it was the Bermukkee himself, who said to my brother in a very civil manner, that he was welcome; and asked him what he wanted? My lord, answered my brother, in a begging tone, I am a poor man who stands in need of the help of such rich and generous persons as yourself. He could not have addressed himself to a fitter person than this lord, who had a thousand good qualities.

The Bermukkee seemed to be astonished at my brother's answer, and putting both his hands to his stomach, as if he would rend his clothes for grief, Is it possible, cried he, that I am at Bagdad, and that such a man as you is so poor as you say? this is what must never be. My brother, fancying that he was going to give him some singular mark of his bounty, blessed him a thousand times, and wished him all happiness. It shall not be said, replied the Bermukkee, that I will abandon you, nor will I have you leave me. Sir, replied my brother, I swear to you I have not eaten one bit to day. Is it true, demanded the Bermukkee, that you are fasting till now? Alas, poor man! he is ready to die for hunger. Ho, boy, cried he, with a loud voice, bring a bason and water presently, that we may wash our hands. Though no boy appeared, and my brother saw neither water nor bason, the Bermukkee fell to rubbing his hands, as if one had poured water upon them, and bade my brother come and wash with him. Schacabac judged by this, that the Bermukkee lord loved to be merry, and he himself understanding raillery, and knowing that the poor must be complaisant to the rich, if they would have any thing from them, came forward and did as he was required.

Come'on, said the Bermukkee, bring us something to eat, and do not let us wait. When he had spoken, though nothing appeared, he began to cut as if something had been brought him upon a plate, and putting his hand to his mouth began to chew, and said to my brother, Come, friend, eat as freely as if you were at home; come, eat; you said you were like to die of hunger, but you eat as if you had no appetite. Pardon me, my lord, said Schacabac, who perfectly imitated what he did, you see I lose no time, and that I play my part well enough. How like you this bread, said the Bermukkee; do not you find it very good? O! my lord, replied my brother, who saw neither bread nor meat, I have never eaten any thing so white and so fine. Eat your belly-full, said the Bermukkee; I assure you the woman who bakes me this good bread cost me five hundred pieces of gold to purchase her.

The Bermukkee, after having boasted so much of his bread, which my brother ate only in idea, cried, Boy, bring us another dish: and though no boy appeared, Come, my good friend, continued he, taste this new dish; and tell me if ever you ate better mutton and barley-broth than this. It is admirably good, replied my brother, and therefore you see I eat heartily. You oblige me highly, resumed the Bermukkee; I conjure you then, by the satisfaction I have to see you eat so heartily, that you eat all up, since you like it so well. A little while after he called for a goose and sweet sauce, made up of vinegar, honey, dry raisins, grey peas, and dry figs, which were brought just in the same manner as the others had. The goose is very fat, said the Bermukkee, eat only a leg and a wing; we must save our stomachs, for we have abundance of other dishes to come. He actually called for several others, of which my brother, who was ready to die of hunger, pretended to eat; but what he boasted of more than all the rest was a lamb fed with pistachio nuts, which he ordered to be brought up in the same manner. Here is a dish, said the Bermukkee, that you will see at nobody's table but my own; I would have you eat your belly-full of it. Having spoken thus, he stretched out his hand as if he had had a piece of lamb in it, and putting it to my brother's mouth, There, said he, swallow that, and you will judge whether I had not reason to boast of this dish. My brother thrust out his head, opened his mouth, and made as if he took the piece of lamb, and ate it with extreme pleasure. I knew you would like it, said the Bermukkee. There is nothing in

the world finer, replied my brother; your table is most delicious. Come, bring the ragout; I fancy you will like that as well as you did the lamb: Well, how do you relish it? O! it is wonderful, replied Schacabac; for here we taste all at once, amber, cloves, nutmeg, ginger, pepper, and the most odoriferous herbs, and all these delicacies are so well mixed, that one does not prevent our tasting the other. How pleasant! Honour this ragout, said the Bermukkee, by eating heartily of it. Ho, boy, bring us another ragout. No, my lord, if it please you, replied my brother, for indeed I can eat no more.

Come, take away then, said the Bermukkee, and bring the fruit. He staid a moment as it were to give time for his servants to carry away; after which, he addressed my brother, Taste these almonds, they are good and fresh gathered. Both of them made as if they had peeled the almonds, and eaten them; after this, the Bermukkee invited my brother to eat something else. Look, said he, there are all sorts of fruits, cakes, dry sweetmeats, and conserves, take what you like; then stretching out his hand, as if he had reached my brother something, Look, he continued, there is a lozenge, very good for digestion. Schacabac made as if he ate it, and said, My lord, there is no want of musk here. These lozenges, replied the Bermukkee, are made at my own house, where nothing is wanting to make every article good. He still bade my brother eat, and said to him, Methinks you do not eat as if you had been so hungry as you complained you were when you came in. My lord, replied Schacabac, whose jaws ached with moving and having nothing to eat, I assure you I am so full that I cannot eat one bit more.

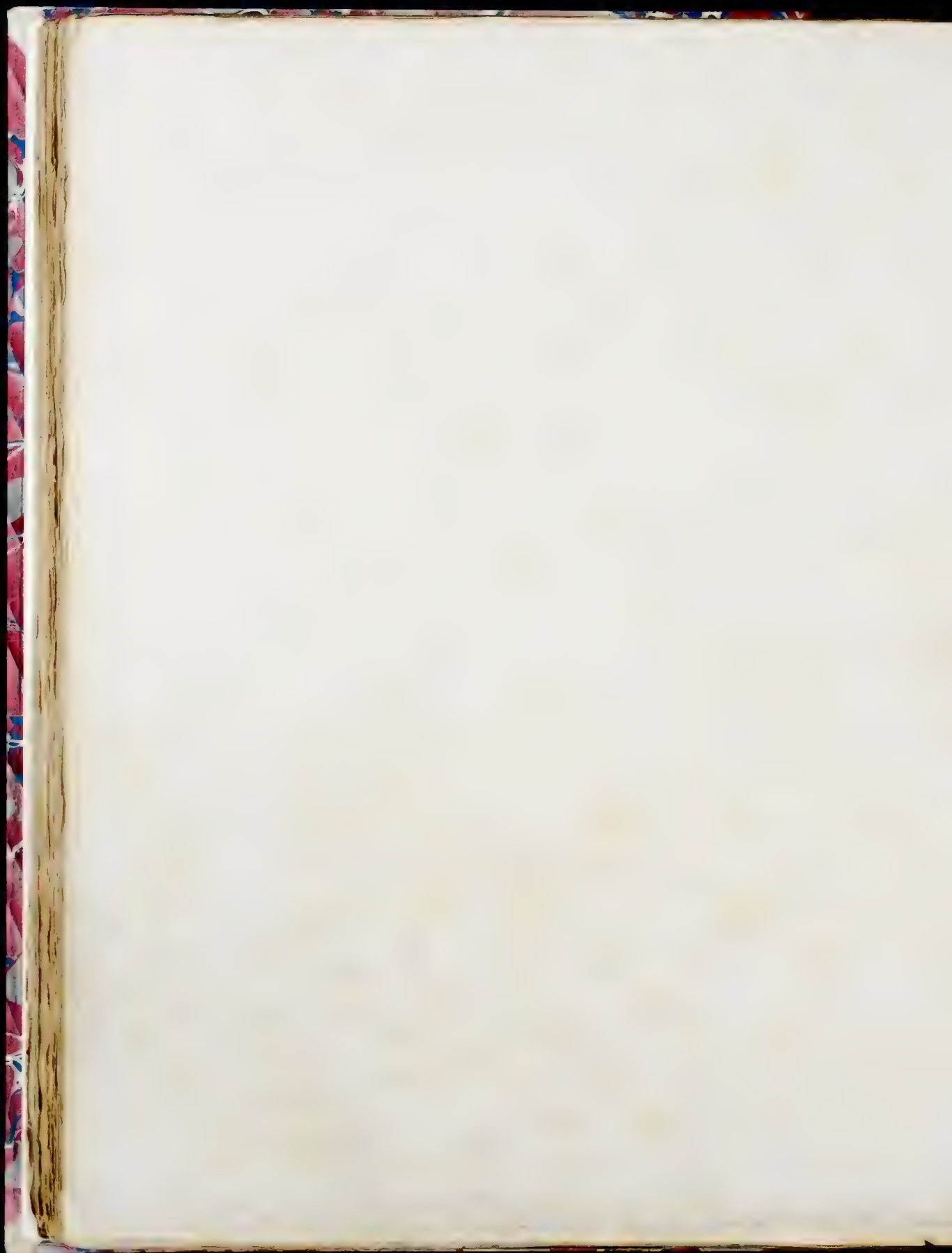
Well then, friend, resumed the Bermukkee, we must drink now, after we have eaten so well. You may drink wine, my lord, replied my brother, but I will drink none if you please, because I am forbidden. You are too scrupulous, rejoined the Bermukkee; do as I do. I will drink then out of complaisance, said Schacabac, for I see you will have nothing wanting to make your treat complete; but since I am not accustomed to drink wine, I am afraid I shall commit some error in point of good breeding, and contrary to the respect that is due to you; therefore I pray you, once more, to excuse me from drinking any wine; I will be content with water. No, no, said the Bermukkee, you shall drink wine, and at the same time he commanded some to be brought, in the same manner as the meat and fruit had been served before. He made as if he poured out







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wine, and drank first himself, and then pouring out for my brother, presented him the glass, saying, Drink my health, and let us know if you think this wine good. My brother made as if he took the glass, and looked as if the colour was good, and put it to his nose to try the flavour: he then made a low salute to the Bermukkee, to signify that he took the liberty to drink his health, and lastly he appeared to drink with all the signs of a man that drinks with pleasure: My lord, said he, this is very excellent wine, but I think it is not strong enough. If you would have stronger, answered the Bermukkee, you need only speak, for I have several sorts in my cellar. Try how you like this. Upon which he made as if he poured out another glass for himself, and one for my brother; and did this so often, that Schacabac, feigning to be intoxicated with the wine, and acting a drunken man, lifted up his hand, and gave the Bermukkee such a box on the ear, as made him fall down. He was going to give him another blow, but the Bermukkee holding up his hand to ward it off, cried, Are you mad? Then my brother, making as if he had come to himself again, said, My lord, you have been so good as to admit your slave into your house, and give him a treat; you should have been satisfied with making me eat, and not have obliged me to drink wine; for I told you beforehand, that it might occasion me to fail in my respect for you. I am very sorry for it, and beg you a thousand pardons.

Scarcely had he finished these words, when the Bermukkee, instead of being in a passion, fell a laughing with all his might. I have been long, said he, seeking a man of your character. He then caressed Schacabac mightily, and told him, I not only forgive the blow you have given me, but I desire henceforward we should be friends, and that you take my house for your home: you have had the complaisance to accommodate yourself to my humour, and the patience to keep the jest up to the last; we will now eat in good earnest. When he had finished these words, he clapped his hands, and commanded his servants, who then appeared, to cover the table; which was speedily done, and my brother was treated with all those dishes in reality, which he ate of before in fancy. At last they cleared the table, and brought in the wine, and at the same time a number of handsome slaves, richly apparelled, came and sung some agreeable airs to their musical instruments. In a word, Schacabac had all the reason in the world to be satisfied with the Bermukkee's

civility and bounty; for he treated him as his familiar friend, and ordered him a suit from his wardrobe.

The Bermukkee found my brother to be a man of so much wit and understanding, that in a few days after he entrusted him with the care of his household and all his affairs. My brother acquitted himself very well in that employment for twenty years; at the end of which the generous Bermukkee died, and leaving no heirs, all his property was confiscated to the use of the prince; and my brother lost all he had acquired. Being reduced to his first condition, he joined a caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca, designing to accomplish that pilgrimage by their charity; but unfortunately the caravan was attacked and plundered by a number of Bedouins, superior to that of the pilgrims. My brother was then taken as a slave by one of the Bedouins, who put him under the bastinado for several days, to oblige him to ransom himself. Schacabac protested that it was all in vain. I am your slave, said he, you may dispose of me as you please; but I declare to you, that I am extremely poor, and not able to redeem myself. In a word, my brother discovered to him all his misfortunes, and endeavoured to soften him with tears; but the Bedouin was not to be moved, and being vexed to find himself disappointed of a considerable sum of which he reckoned himself sure, he took his knife and slit my brother's lips, to avenge himself by this inhumanity for the loss that he thought he had sustained.

The Bedouin had a handsome wife, and frequently when he went on his excursions left my brother alone with her. At such times she used all her endeavours to comfort my brother under the rigour of his slavery. She gave him tokens enough that she loved him, but he durst not return her passion, for fear he should repent; and therefore avoided being alone with her, as much as she sought the opportunity to be alone with him. She was so much in the habit of toying and playing with the miserable Schacabac, whenever she saw him, that one day she happened to act in the same manner, in the presence of her husband. My brother, without taking notice that he observed them (so his sins would have it), played likewise with her. The Bedouin, immediately supposing that they lived together in a criminal manner, fell upon my brother in a rage, and after he had mutilated him in a barbarous manner, carried him on a camel to the top of a de-

sert mountain, where he left him. The mountain was on the road to Bagdad, so that the passengers who saw him there informed me where he was. I went thither speedily, and found unfortunate Schacabac in a deplorable condition: I gave him what help he stood in need of, and brought him back to the city.

This is what I told the caliph Mustunsir, added the barber; that prince applauded me with new fits of laughter. Now, said he, I cannot doubt but they justly give you the surname of Silent. No one can say the contrary; for certain reasons, however, I command you to depart this town immediately, and let me hear no more of you. I yielded to necessity, and travelled for several years in distant countries. Understanding at last that the caliph was dead, I returned to Bagdad, where I found not one of my brothers alive. It was on my return to this city that I did the lame young man the important service which you have heard. You are, however, witnesses of his ingratitude, and of the injurious manner in which he treated me; instead of testifying his obligation, he rather chose to fly from me, and leave his own country. When I understood that he was not at Bagdad, though no one could tell me whither he was gone, I determined to seek him. I travelled from province to province a long time; and when I least expected, met him this day, but I little thought to find him so incensed against me.

When the barber had concluded his story, continued the tailor, we found that the young man was not to blame for calling him a great chatterer. However, we wished him to stay with us, and partake of the entertainment which the master of the house had prepared. We sat down to table, and were merry together till afternoon prayers; when all the company parted, and I went to my shop, till it was time to return home.

It was during this interval that hunch-back came half drunk before my shop, where he sung and played on his taber. I thought that, by taking him home with me, I should divert my wife: my wife gave us a dish of fish, and I presented hunch-back some, which he ate without taking notice of a bone. He fell down dead before us, and after having in vain essayed to help him, in the trouble and fear occasioned by such an unlucky accident, we carried the corpse out, and dexterously lodged him with the Jewish doctor. The Jewish doctor put him into the chamber of the purveyor, and the purveyor carried him out into

the street, where it was believed the merchant had killed him. This, sir, added the tailor, is what I had to say to satisfy your majesty, who must pronounce whether we be worthy of mercy or wrath, life or death.

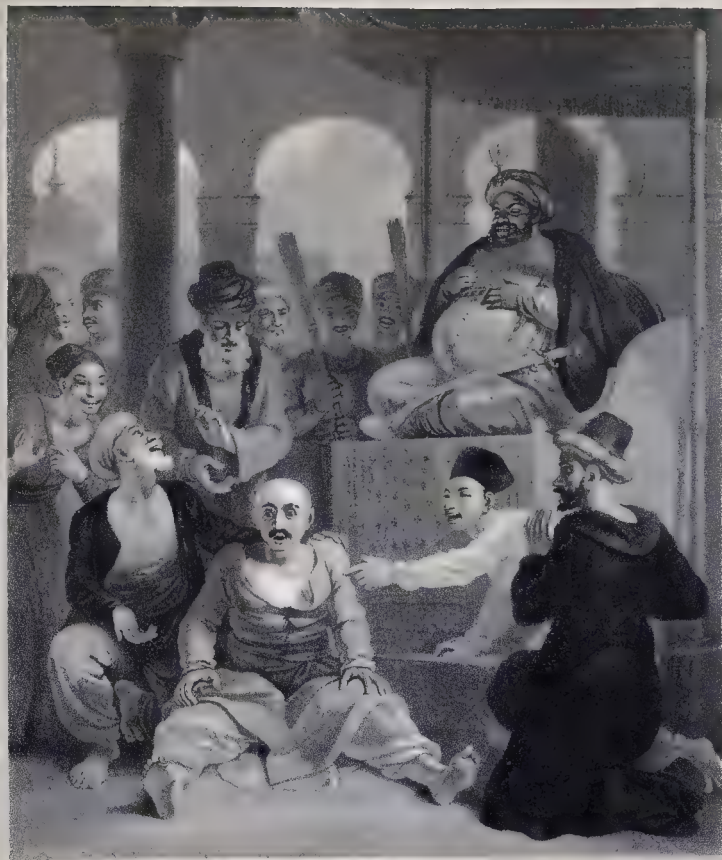
The sultan of Casgar shewed a satisfaction in his countenance, which restored the tailor and his comrades to life. I cannot but acknowledge, said he, that I am more struck with the history of the young cripple, with that of the barber, and with the adventures of his brothers, than with the story of my jester; but before I send you all away, and we proceed to bury hunch-back, I should like to see the barber who is the occasion of my pardoning you; since he is in my capital, it is easy to satisfy my curiosity. At the same time he sent an officer with the tailor to find him.

The officer and the tailor went immediately, and brought the barber, whom they presented to the sultan: the barber was a venerable man about ninety years of age; his eye-brows and beard were white as snow, his ears hanging down, and his nose very long. The sultan could not forbear laughing when he saw him. Silent man, said he to him, I understand that you know wonderful stories, will you tell me some of them? Sir, answered the barber, let us forbear the stories, if you please, at present. I most humbly beg your majesty to permit me to ask what that Christian, that Jew, that Moosulmaun and that dead hunch-back, who lies on the ground, do here before your majesty? The sultan smiled at the barber's freedom, and replied, Why do you ask? Sir, replied the barber, it concerns me to ask, that your majesty may know I am not so great a talker as some represent me, but a man justly called *Silent*.

The sultan of Casgar had the condescension to satisfy the barber's curiosity. He commanded them to tell him the story of the hunch-back, which he seemed earnestly to wish for. When the barber heard it, he shook his head, as if he would say, there was something under this which he did not understand. Truly, cried he, this is a surprising story; but I wish to examine hunch-back a little nearer. He approached him, sat down on the ground, took his head between his knees, and after he had looked at him steadfastly, fell into so great a fit of laughter, and had so little command of himself, that he fell backwards on the ground, without considering that he was in the presence of the sultan of Casgar. As soon as he came to himself, It is said, cried he, and not without









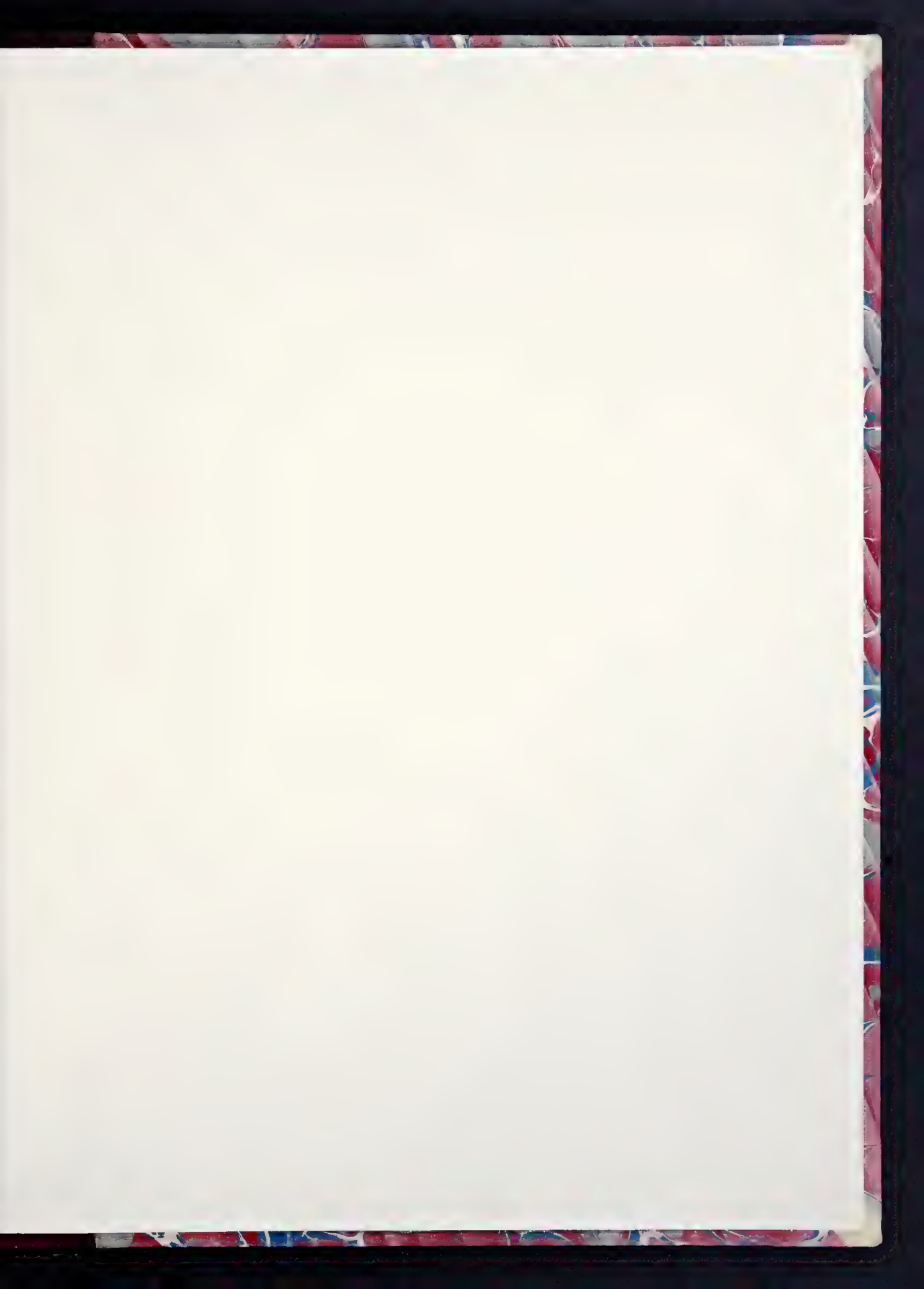
reason, that no man dies without a cause. If ever any history deserved to be written in letters of gold, it is that of this hunch-back.

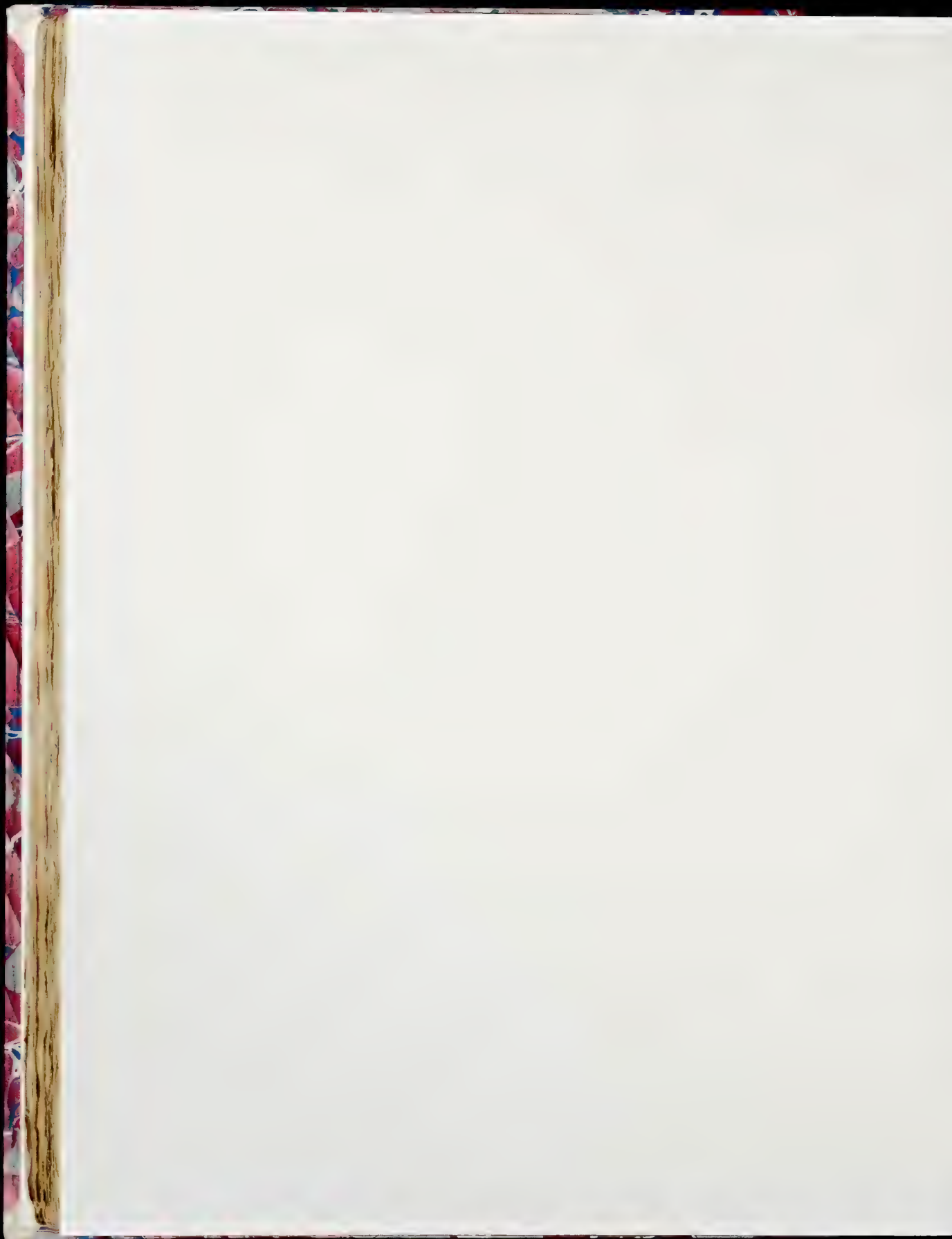
At this all the people looked on the barber as a buffoon, or an old dotard. Silent man, said the sultan, why do you laugh? Sir, answered the barber, I swear by your majesty's benevolence, that hunch-back is not dead: he is yet alive, and I shall be content to pass for a madman if I do not convince you this minute. So saying, he took a box wherein he had several medicines that he carried about him to use as occasion might require; and drew out a little phial of balsam, with which he rubbed hunch-back's neck a long time; then he took out of his case a neat iron instrument, which he put betwixt his teeth, and after he had opened his mouth, he thrust down his throat a pair of small pincers, with which he took out a bit of fish and bone, which he shewed to all the people. Immediately hunch-back sneezed, stretched forth his arms and feet, opened his eyes, and shewed several other signs of life.

The sultan of Casgar, and all who were witnesses of this operation, were less surprised to see hunch-back revive, after he had passed a whole night, and great part of a day, without giving any sign of life, than at the merit and capacity of the barber, who performed this; and notwithstanding all his faults, began to look upon him as a great physician. The sultan, transported with joy and admiration, ordered the story of hunch-back to be written down, with that of the barber, that the memory of them might, as it deserved, be preserved for ever. Nor did he stop here; but, that the tailor, Jewish doctor, purveyor, and Christian merchant might remember the adventure, which the accident of hunch-back had occasioned, with pleasure, he did not send them away till he had given each of them a very rich robe, with which he caused them to be clothed in his presence. As for the barber, he honoured him with a great pension, and kept him near his person.

THE END.

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